AN EXCELLENT TREATISE OF CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOVSNES, WRITTEN FIRST in the French tongue by *M. I. de l'Espine*, and translated into English by *I. Feilde* for the comforte of afflicted consciences, verie necessarie and profitable to be reade of all Christians, as well for establishing them in the true doctrine of Iustification, as also for enabling them to confute the false doctrine of all Papistes and Heretickes.

Th.
8° G153

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To the Reader.

Loe here the ioy of Christians all,
laid vp within this booke:
To teache the way that leades to life,
whereon ech man may looke.
It is not we, but it is he,
that freely giueth life:
That none but he, may praised be
without gainesay or strife.

TO THE VERTVOVS AND MY VERY DEARE FREND THE LADY ELIzabeth Terwhitte I. F. wisheth encrease of godlines, and constancy in the true religion of Christ to the ende and in the ende.

RIght vvorshipfull, & my very good Lady, after I had perused this litle treatise of Christian righteousnes, as it vvas first vvritten in the Frenche tongue, I tooke great cõfort in it & thoughte it to be very necessary, to be turned into Englishe for the benefite of Christes poore Church. I therefore as occasiõ serued at conuenient times, performed that I purposed, vvherein I haue studied to be as simple and plaine (because of the vnlearned) as possibly the matter & phrase of that tongue vvould suffer me. I am not ignoraunt vvhat an hard thing it is to translate vvell, and contrarivvise, hovv easie a thing it is for euery carping Momus, or ignoraunt Zoilus te

finde fault: but herein I shall as God shall assist me, arme my selfe vvith pacïẽce to beare vvhatsoeuer hath bin, is, or shalbe layd vpon me. This only shall cõfort me, that I vvalke not before men, but before God: in vvhose presence I protest, that according to the simple knowledge he hath giuen me, I haue dealt simply and sincerely. Of all vanities I esteeme it the greatest, to hange vppon the blastes of mens mouthes. They that are that vvaies caried highest, and haue not the testimony of good consciences, neither seeke to approue themselues to God, to vvhom they must stand or faule, they shall finde no comfort in it, in the day of death. It litle availeth a man to be iustified of the vvhole vvorld, and to be condemned before God. Therefore God giue vs grace to vvalke as in his presence, that vvhatsoeuer vve take in hande, it may be consecrated to him, & haue an excellent blessing vpon it. I haue dedicated my labours herein, to your good Ladyshippe for sundry causes, thogh I deny not, but my meaning is to make them common to the church of God: first that they may be a testimony to

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all posterity of your forvvardnes, fidelity & sinceritie in the religion of Christ Iesus: Then, of my bounden duety and good vvill tovvards you. And I most humbly beseeche you in the eyes and sight of the vvhole vvorlde, that you constantly and inuiolably holde and keepe that blessed hope of your best inheritance. And as God in mercy hath dravven you out of the sincke and mier of Poperie, and of the false vvorshippe of God (vvherto, as to all other vices vve are most apt by nature) to the true religion of Christ, so goe forvvards, and most humbly and continually thanke him for it. Acknovvledge it the greatest benefit that euer in mercy he coulde haue bestovved vppon you. Bevvare of the vvorld, that maketh least accompt of this most excellent, and vvaighty thinge. Study by all meanes to answvere this holy & excellent callinge, that your religion may shine as vvell in vvorkes as in vvordes, in an holy conuersation as in a sincere professiō. Knovv assuredly that vvhere the truth of God raigneth, there the kingdome of Sathan decaieth, the strength of sinne abateth,

the pleasures of the flesh are restrained, & Iesus Christ by the scepter of his holy vvord & blessed spirit, cõtinually vvorketh, to the daily mortifying of the outvvard man and quickening the invvard, to the brideling & maistering of the affections of the mind: till it be renued, reformed & chaunged into his holy obedience, and so by litle and litle be translated into his kingdome. And till this be brought to passe, you shall neuer feele vvhat Christes righteousnes is (vvhich is our only happines) vvherof this booke so notably & comfortably entreateth. The Lord Iesus open your heart, and giue you vnderstanding in all his misteries, that you may see his great glory, till you may comprehende vvith all Saincts the height, depth, vvidth and length of his glorious righteousnes, laying holde vpon it through a liuely faith, and so be sealed vp through him (as I doubt not but you are) to euerlasting happines, fare you vvell most humbly from my poore house this seconde of Nouember. 1577.

Your good Ladyships bounden in the Lord. I. F.

AN

AN EXCELLENT TREATISE, OF CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOVSNES,

Made by M. I. de l'Espine Minister of the worde of God, and newly put furthe for the instruction and consolation of the children of God.

THERE is not any one article in all our Christian Fayth the knowledge whereof came be so helthfull and necessarie vnto vs, as this of Christian righteousnesse. Nowe forasmuch as of this righteousnesse dependeth euerlasting life, and of Faith dependeth this righteousnesse, and of Faith cometh that knowledge which we haue of the promises of our God, and of Jesus Christ, who is the onely meane, that they are applyed, and freely accomplished towardes vs, without hauinge any respect to any of our workes: It behoueth for the better vnderstanding of all these thinges aright, that we laye them furthe in order, & beginne with the definition of Christian

Abacuc 2.4
Rom. 1.17.
Rom. 3.24. *and* 15.
2. *Cor.* 1.20.

The definition of the righteousnesse of the philosophers and schoolemē.

righteousnesse. But it must be noted that in the holy Scripture the signification and vse of this worde (Righteousnesse) is farre different from that which is vsurped in the bookes of the philosophers and schoolemen: because they take righteousnesse, for a certaine habite and qualitie, which being enclosed in our minde, enclineth vs to liue honestly, and in such sorte to order the course of all our actions, that they be entirelie conformable to reason, and to those rules that are sette out vnto vs in the Lawe. A thinge that we can not doe perfectly, seeing that we are loaden and compassed about with so greate infirmitie, and for that our nature beinge so diseased and corrupted, it pricketh vs, and wholy turneth vs, from the loue, study and exercise of that which is good: and disposeth and stirreth vs vp to the quite contrary, to embrace and followe vice, with a meruelous will and readynesse. Adde hereunto, that we are driuen and ledde in this case by many tentations and assaultes, wherewith the flesh, the worlde and deuill doe continually assaile vs. Wherfore we must conclude, that in the whole worlde, there can neuer be founde a righteous man if righteousnesse be to be measured according to that definition, which the philosophers haue giuen: and that it be established, in a perfection

fection of vertue, which we must more loue, esteeme and honour, then any other good, and apply our whole spirite, and all our vnderstanding to atteine to it, and possesse it: without thinking at any time that this is any meane to make vs to be accompted righteous before God, in whose presence and iudgement all our workes shal euer be found imperfect and damnable, if they be examined according to the rigour of his righteousnes. *Iob. 4. 18. & 9. 3. & 25. 4.*

To vnderstande then what this Christian righteousnes is, and in what it consisteth, it is meete to note, that Righteousnesse and iudgement, are corelatyues, and for the better vnderstanding of the one, it must be layde and ioyned with the other. The which thing maye easely be obserued in many places of the newe Testament, where righteousnes is ioyned with iustification, and iustification with righteousnes. In such sorte, that comparing these places one with on other, a man shall finde that righteousnes is no other thinge but the meane whereby we are iustified before the iudgement seate of God. And that iustification is nothing else but a release of our sinnes which we obteine there through the fauour, and in the contemplation of the merite of Jesus Christ, who hath there discharged vs. *Rom. 3. 4. 5.*

What righteousnes is.

What iustificatiō is.

Many kinds of iudgements.

But here it is to be noted, that there are many kindes of iudgements differing one frō the other, that is to wit, there is the iudgement of God: the iudgement of the Law: the iudgemēt of men, and of our owne conscience: & we must know whether our owne righteousnes be sufficient to satisfie & answere to euery one of these iudgementes, and whether the same in any of these, can stande vs in steede to obtaine an acquitement and deliuerance of the accusations that are propounded by our enemies there against vs.

The iudgement of God.

Concerning Gods iudgement which is the first of the foure, we must answere that it is impossible there, that we can defende vs, if we haue no other thing to bring forth and alleage but our owne innocencie: forasmuch as our thoughtes, our affections, our wordes, our actions, & generally our whole life and nature being examined, it shalbe found that in man is nothing else but vanity, and to be shorte the very matter of death and damnation, for how can an euill tree bring forth any good frute? & how can rotten and wormeaten seede, engender any thing, but like it selfe? In like maner how can a man frō a poysned & infected vessel draw one drop of good wine? let vs conclude thē, that we neither do, nor can doe any thinge, that can be able

Psal. 39. 6. 12.

Psal. 51. 7. & 62. 10.

Similitudes shewing the corruptiō of man, & his vnhabilitie to do good.

able to sustaine, the rigorous examinatiõ of the righteousnes of God, and that in vs and in our whole life there is nothinge ẏ can in this case defende & deliuer vs but his mercy alone. Because we are as the Prophet sayeth, a wildernes altogether couered with thistles, brambles, and bryers, which are good for nothinge, but to be burnt, and a very dunghill of corruption where there is nothing (as S. Augustine saith) but euen the very sincke and aboundance of miserie and filthines. *Osee 2.3.* *In his boke of confessiõs. 2 chap. 10.*

The beginning then of our righteousnes is, that we accuse and condempne our selues, and that we confesse before God that (which he knoweth well enough) to witte that we are nothing but dust and corruption. *The beginning of our righteousnesse is to knowe our vnrighteousnes.*

The prodigall childe being farre from his fathers house, neuer thought that he coulde returne thether or attaine to righteousnesse and vertue, from which he was departed, but by the knowledge and feeling which he had of his faults, & the sure perswasion which he had conceaued to confesse them. *The example of the prodigall childe.* *Luc 15.18.*

The publican comming to the temple loaden and couered with vice & sinne had remembraunce of his vice and wretchednes, which he with great griefe and deepe gronings confessed: whereupon it came to passe that he re- *The second example of the publican, Luc 18. 13. 14.*

turned righteous into his owne house.

3. Example of Dauid and of Peter. 2.Sa.12.13 Luc. 22.62.

After Dauid & holy Peter were faine from God, through a great vnkindnes & ignorance, as well from him, as from those graces, which they had receaued of his large liberality, had they any other meane to be recõciled vnto him, but by ỹ acknowledgement & cõfession of their sinnes? whereupon we must conclude, that by this we must approche before God. And that there is nothinge that doth more allure & knit vs to him, then a penitent heart which (as S. Augustine sayth) feeleth and continually complaineth for his sinnes and imperfections.

The acknowledgement of our miseries is the fundasion of our religion.

This humility is not onely the foundation of our righteousnesse (as Iohn Chrisostome saith) but also of all our religion, the which decayeth as soone as we begin to conceaue any opinió of our selues or of our owne vertues. He (sayth S. Augustine) will not be any longer of the body, that refuseth to be humble, and to make himselfe litle with his head: for ordinarily as the valleyes are more abounda nt and bringe foorth more frute then doe the mountaines, by reason that being more low, they receaue more commodiously all the fatnes which falleth and descendeth from the hie hilles: euen so it behoueth that we be more low and humble in our owne eyes, if we will, that God fulfill

A similitude shewing the good that commeth of humility. 1.Sa.15.17

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vs with his graces: the which may finde no place in vs, if we presume any whit of our vertues. The same which Christ sayth to those Scribes and Pharisеis, when he saw them arrogant and presumptuous, and puffed vp with a vaine and false opinion, that they had conceaued of their owne righteousnesse: you iustifie your selues before men, sayth he to them: but God knoweth your hearts within, before whom, they are most abhominable, that are in greatest credit and reputation, in the world. *Luk. 16.15.*

Wherfore where there is any question concerning righteousnes, we must diligently take heede that we be not like those that are sicke of the dropsie, who by reason of the grossenesse of their bodies, seeme to be in good estate: notwithstanding they be full of nothing but water and such euill humors, which in the end are the cause of their death. *Pride is quite contrary to our helth. A similitude.*

That then ỹ outward appearance which we may haue of any vertue do not abuse & deceaue vs, let vs know that all the vertue, whereof we may be furnished, can no more endure before God, then waxe before the fire. And as it can not be but that one pinne or needle is enough to pearce a bladder, and to make all the winde therein inclosed, incontinently to come foorth: euen so it can not be, but that euen a litle tenta- *A similitude shewinge that all the perfectiō that mē in any wise may haue, is nothinge else but imperfection before God.*

tation is enough to drawe the vizard from hypocrites, & to discouer them to euery one, who shall knowe, after that they shalbe sifted, that there was nothing but a colour and an imagination of all the reputation of righteousnes & vertue, which they had gotten amongest men.

Lette vs not make then any accompt of all the righteousnes which can be in vs, nor let vs not bring it to ỹ iudgemẽt of our God, to better our cause, or to winne there by lawe any thing for vs. Forasmuch as there was neuer any other cause of the ruine of the Iewes, nor any thinge that ouerthrewe them, and made them frustrate of the hope they had to attaine to the righteousnesse which they pretended, but the only presumptuous opinion they had conceaued to be able to appeare there, through their owne righteousnes.

Rom. 10.3.

Now to the end we faule not headlong into the like daunger and inconuenience, let vs acknowledge and feele in our selues, that we are not able to thinke one onely good thought, but let vs be resolued in this, that all our ability is from the alone grace and bounty of our God. For all our glory (as S. Paul sayth) is excluded, and we haue not any thinge in our selues, whereof we may boast our selues.

2. Cor. 3.5.

Rom. 3.27. & 5.2.

For beinge naturally deade in sinne as

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we are, can we haue any good motion or feelinge? But it is certaine that before our regeneration, and before we be called through the grace of God to the knowledge of him: we are blinde and can not see any whitte of the misteries and secretes of God. Moreouer, we are deaffe and can not heare his voice: we are sicke of the palsey and impotente, and not able to walke in his waies: we haue an harte of stone. which bringeth foorth no good affection: and a mouth full of bitternes and cursling, and we are as a graue within, from whence commeth nothinge but stenche and corruption: to conclude, we are altogether deade, depriued of all good, in such sorte, that we haue not any good vse of our reason. Let no man flatter him selfe (sayth S. Augustine) forasmuch as we are nothing of our selues but deuills & Sathans: that is to say of our owne nature, we are enemies of God, of his honour, of his lawe, and of all vertue: and there is not any other difference betwixt vs and Deuills, but the onely pittie, which God hath vnto vs, and the gracious fauour which he woulde shewe vs. And although God haue accepted of vs, and that being receaued into his couenaunt, we are consecrated vnto him to be his temple: notwithstanding all these great & incomprehensible fauours which

Arguments to proue the corruption & vnrighteousnes of man, before God.

1. Cor. 2. 14. Deut. 14. 4. Ezec. 11. 12. 19. and 36. 26.

Rom. 3. 13.

Augustine vpon Iohn.

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he hath shewed vs, we ought not vtterly to abolish the remembrance which we ought alwaies to haue of our horrible corruptiõ. The Scripture to the ende to represse our presumption, & to let, that we forgette not what is the corruption of our nature, putteth vs continually in remembraunce, that we and all flesh are nothing but grasse, wormes meate, dust, and filth, as Dauid sayth that God knoweth vs, & whereof we are made: and that to be briefe, we are nothinge but dust and putrefaction: yea that the greatest and goodliest of the whole world with all their commodity & bewty, which men worship, are nothinge but vanity: and that if they were put into the ballaunce to be wayed with nothing, nothing would be found heauier then they. Beinge then so noted in the Scripture, yea when we are so adorned and enriched with the great & precious gifts of our God: in what estimation shall we haue righteousnes and vertues whereof we thinke to haue so great plenty?

Iosue.40.6.

Psa.103.14

Psa.62.10

We do as marchaunts, who alwaies praise and esteeme their wares & marchaundise more then they are worth: euen so do we of our vertues: but when they are examined and prised by those which knowe them, as by the spirit of God and his Prophetes, they are altogether

A similitude to shew the hypocrisie and misery of man.

iudged,

as olde ragges, torne tyed together & patched: & as old images new gilded ouer, ꝑ which outwardly haue some glistering & shew, but within are nothinge but dust & durt: or, as counterfaite money, which is of ill mettal how goodly a printe soeuer it haue. All our righteousnesses saith Esay are as olde ragges, foule and lothsome to see. S. Paule albeit he walked in the law, without rebuke, and that he felt himselfe not culpable in any thing in his conscience nor willingly to haue transgressed: yet notwithstandinge he esteemeth his righteousnesse as dongue. Daniell praying vnto God, alleageth not his owne righteousnes & vertues, neither the righteousnesse & vertues of his compagnions, to the ende to cause God to encline, and to heare his prayers. Now (sayth he) that we are before thy face, we can set nothing before thee, nor propound any thing on our part but shame and confusion. Cursed (sayth Augustine) be all our righteousnesses, if they be iudged without the mercy of God. And Tertullian: All the good that we do (sayth he) and all the righteousnesse and vertue which is in vs, is nothinge but shame and reproch.

Testimonies of the Scriptures, & Fathers to proue the vnrighteousnesse of man before God.

Philip.3.8.

Dan.9.5.

Augustine.

Tertullian.

When they spake these thinges, it was not without great reason, because there is no righteousnes and vertue in vs, which is not defiled

& polluted with great vices. Also, there is not any faith, which is not mingled with an infinite number of doubtes, errours and fonde imaginatiõs: nor likewise, any godlines which is not contaminate with innumerable scruples and superstitions. To conclude: all our wine (as Esay sayth) is mingled with water, and all our corne is full of darnell and durt.

Esay. 1.22.

These similitudes and other following, shew the beastly pride of them, that thinke to haue in thẽ selues wherewith all to stand before God.

Now if a man woulde boast of his strength and helth, and yet were subiect to a thousande diseases: or of his knowledge, and yet were ignorant of all good learning: or of his ritches, and yet were indebted and indaungered to the whole world: woulde not euery one mocke him as an idiote and a foole? euen so we aswell shew our ignorannce, and what slender vnderstanding we haue, when we wil attribute any righteousnes to our selues, and boaste our selues in it, be it neuer so litle.

Iere. 9. 23.

He that is stronge (sayth Jeremie) let him not boaste and presume of his strength, nor he that is wise of his wisedom, nor he that is ritch of his ritches, because that, if we consider what we haue on the one syde, we must marke what we lacke on the other. And when all shalbe well caste, it shall be founde that the expence will farre surmounte the receipt, and the debtes are much greater, then the reuenue. Moreouer,

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all that is greatest vnder the Sunne, and that which men most wonder at and worship in the worlde, is nothing else (as Solomon sayeth) but vanitie. Is there any thing so stable and durable, which is not mutable, transitory, and vncertaine? what madnes then is it to make so great a matter and so highely to esteeme of our selues, for thinges of so small valewe? we are oftentimes like to those that dreame and wake againe, who when they are a sleape thinke to haue founde some great treasure, and haue a great ioye in it: but after their wakening, they see that all is vanished like smoke, whereupon they vexe & greiue themselues. Likewise when we thinke that we are righteous, this is a dreame, which passeth through our spirits and vanisheth assoone as we are awake and are deliuered from the darkenes of ignorance, wherin we were a sleape and buried. S. Paule whilest he was ignoraunt, without a true and right knowledge of ỹ lawe, thought to be righteous, and feelt not sinne any whitte raigning in him, vntill that God by his grace, had illuminated him, & made his will by the lawe knowen vnto him, & so consequently the lustes, & corruptiõ ỹ was in his nature. The which made him soone enough to forgoe the opiniõ which he had conceaued of his owne righteousnes and vertues.

Eccle. 4. 6. & 1. 1.

A similitude.

An example in Paul before his conuersion.

An other similitude.

After that we haue well swept our chambers, it seemeth vnto vs ẏ they are very cleane. And yet notwithstanding, whē the sunne commeth, to enter there by the windowes, we perceaue streight waies by the beames an infinite deale of dust, which ẏ philosophers call motes: euen so oftentimes before we be wel instructed in ẏ law of God, if we be exempted from grosse & palpable sinnes, such as are murthers, whordomes, thefces, we glorie that we are perfect and innocent. But when our consciences come to be discried by the word of God, & that Iesus Christ who is the light hath entred there by his spirite: then he maketh vs to see by his beames an infinite number of faultes and imperfections, which are hidden in our heartes, as are the serpentes in their holes. S. Paule sayth that he neuer vnderstoode, that concupiscence was a vice, vntil he had seene in the law, that it was there forbidden. Yea, but hadde he not learned this in the schoole of Gamaliel, before his conuersion? I graunt, as concerninge the outwarde barke and superficially. But he had not attained yet to the bottome, the which we can not do, vntill we haue ben in the schoole of Iesus Christ, whoe in the law wil make vs truely to know both God and our selues, euen as the sunne shining by his brightnes maketh

Rom.7.7.

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vs to see it selfe, and all thinges with it.

In the night by reason of the darkenesse spreade vpon the earth, all thinges are hidde and couered: which causeth that we can not discerne and discouer the spottes which we haue in our faces: But when the light beginneth to appeare, and that we take a glasse, to beholde our selues therin: then they are discouered and shewe themselues: euen so likewise during the time that we are couered with the darkenes of ignorance, the vices that dwell in vs, are hidden there, and oftentimes we thinke, being leprous & deformed, that we are bewtifull and perfect: but our eyes being open, and illuminate by the spirite and grace of our God, and taking the glasse of the law, therein to beholde the estate of our nature and our life: then we beginne to knowe the great and greuous imperfections that are in vs: and we attonce loose the opinion which we had conceaued before, of our owen righteousnes and vertues. *An other similitude.*

We are oftentimes like vnto dronkardes who being ouercharged with wine and meate, haue no maner of knowledge or feeling of the case wherin they are, nor of any thing else, and yet hauing their face couered, and all to berayed with durt, they canne not perceaue it vntill that their wine be drenched, and their *An other similitude.*

vaine deliuered from those fumes and vapours wherby they were so letted, & darkened. We likewise, before we be regenerate, are in such sorte besotted with a loue that we beare to our selues, and with a vaine opinion that we haue conceaued of our selues, that we know not the filthynesse and vilanies wherwith we are berayed. But when the lighte of the spirite and word of God beginnes to breake forth vnto vs, we come by litle and litle to breake and scatter those cloudes, which were before our senses, and recouering the view of our reason, we beginne to awake our selues, and discouer the pitiefull and miserable estate wherin we are. And looke as this knowledge groweth and encreaseth in vs, so much the more it augmenteth and encreaseth the knowledge of our vices and imperfections. As we may see by experience in the fathers, who though they were notable and excellent personages, and marked with all notable vertues: yet notwithstanding they made no accompt of them: but contrarywise they confessed that they were the greatest sinners in the worlde as a man maye see by those goodly confessions which the scripture mentioneth, to haue bin made of Abraham, Isaac, Iacob, Dauid, Ieremie, Daniell, S. Paule, S. Iohn, and generally of the whole Church: by which

The Patriarches, Prophetes and Apostles: in whom they sought their righteousnes.

we

we woulde iudge them to haue bene the most wicked men, which were vpon the earth, if we knew not the humilitie, that was in them, and in what contempt they had them selues and their workes, for the great knowledge they had of the lawe of God: the which engendred in them an other thinge, to wit, the knowledge of the imperfection which was in them and in their life, when they came to measure it, according to the rule of the lawe, & brought all their thoughtes, desires, wordes and actions, to be tried by the will and ordinaunce of God.

We saye in a common prouerbe, that such a one as thinketh himselfe in best health, carieth death in his bosome. Which must not onely be vnderstood of the bodely helth, but also of the health of the soule. For the diseases of the body are nothing so dangerous, as those of the soule: because that verie many (albeit their hartes are full of distrustes, doubtinges, errors, false opinions, ingratitudes, enuies, reuengements, darkenes, ignorance, and other deadely diseases) neuertheles they thinke them selues in very good health, and that their righteousnes is sufficient to enable them, to aunswer and satisfie the iudgement of God. As that prowde Pharise, who in steade of humbling himselfe before God & confessing this faultes

A similitude taken of a comm prouerbe.

Luc 8.11.

to him setteth forthe and extolleth his owen
Mat.19.20 workes, in his prayer: And the Scribe that
bragged, that he had accomplished the whole
Iere.2.23. law: and the Sinagogue, that boasted her selfe,
of her owen innocency, and in that, that she had
not sinned. Wherefore God caused complainte
to be made against her, to conuince her of hipo-
crisie, and of the sinnes, that she had forgotten,
through negligence, and of the loue, that she
ought to haue borne vnto him.

Although then that God doth not alwayes
discouer our faultes wholly vnto vs, he wil not
therefore that we make light of them: but if we
do, he streight wayes calleth vs to a reckning,
and requireth them of vs, and constraineth vs
to confesse them vnto him, that he may forgiue
vs: to the ende, that we maye haue occasion
hereby, to acknowledge and set forth his great
liberalitie. And this is all that he requireth and
demaundeth of vs for hauing acquited and dis-
charged vs of such a great and notable summe,
wherein we were indebted to him. For looke
how much soeuer of the glorie of any righ-
teousnesse and vertue we attribute to our sel-
ues, so muche we diminishe of the bountie
and liberalitie of our God, and we prouoke
him to ielousie, because we beare him not that
loue, nor reuerence, that we owe vnto him,

but

but doe more loue our owen honour then his. And euen like as a housband louing his wife tenderly, (to make his affection knowen vnto her, bestowing vpon her many great presentes of golde and costly iewelles,) is verie heauie if she dissemble the gifts which he hath bestowed vpon her, and saye she hath purchased them by her owen mony: Euen so God can in no wise be pleased with vs, if we will conceale or els attribute to our selues, ỹ graces which he hath bestowed vpon vs, which he woulde haue to be testimonies, tokens and demonstrations of the inuiolable loue and fidelitie that he beareth vnto vs. *A similitude.*

Moises saide vnto the people of Israel, whilest they were yet in the wildernes: When thou shalt come into the lande which God hath promised to thy fathers, and shalt haue taken possession thereof, and peaceably enioye the fruictes and delicate thinges that it shall bring forth vnto thee, Take good heede that thou say not, that they strength and righteousnes hath gotten all this: but acknowledge that God, by his onely goodnes and loue which he beareth vnto thee, hath shewed these great benefites and fauours to thee, without hauing any respect of thee, who wast a rebellious and idolatrous people, nor to thy workes, which were altogether *Deut. 8. and 9.*

vitious and faultie: euen so if God hath once brought vs into his Church, let vs beware that we saye not that we haue merited or gotten the graces that be there communicated vnto vs by our owne industrie: but let vs continually confesse our pouertie and vnworthynes, and acknowledge with the Apostle, that in that we are vertuous, we are so, by the meane of his onely goodnes: and then without all comparison we shalbe richer & happyer, then we should be, if we woulde be so, by our owne meane and by our own strēgth: much more I say by the liberality of our good God, who is much richer and more aboundaunt to geue vnto vs, then our owne strength and force can purchase, or heape vpon vs. And we must perswade our selues that God can doe vs more good in one moment, then we knowe howe to desire or to compasse by our trauell or diligence, in tenne milions of yeares.

Similitudes shewinge that we haue neede to be iustified by the onely grace of God.

What cause then is there, that we shoulde not desire and labour to be more righteous by the grace of our God, then by our own vertue? A man shalbe a great deale more healthful that will be throughly gouerned by the regiment & counsell of some good and expert phisitions, then he that wil be lead altogether by his owne appetite. A beast is a greate deale better gouer-

uerned by man, then it can be by it selfe. A feilde, a vine, a tree, are in much better case, being tilled, cutte and pruned by labourers and housbandmen, then if they were leste to them selues. Bodies also being alone, and without any life, are blockes, but hauing the soule and life in them, they are applyed and vsed to an infinite nomber of goodly and excellēt actions: Whereby a man maye easely perceaue, that the inferiour natures, to the ende they may be well gouerned and ruled, haue neede of the gouernement & guiding of the superiour. Whēce commeth it then, that in the matter of righteousnes, we thinke that our reason and will haue more might, then the grace of our God?

There are certaine glorious beastes, which bragge that they haue gotten that which they knowe, by their owne onely diligence, and without the helpe of any other maister and teacher: and that they are no further bounde, for the good they know, then to their owne labour and trauell. And also there be some others yet more prowde and arrogant, who thinke them selues with power sufficiently enabled, to get all vertues by their owne naturall faculties: as Pelagius and all his secte, who canne not better shew their arrogancie and ignorannce, then in thus pleasing them selues, in them

Pelagius & his sect.

selues, and hauing in such estimation and admiration, the naturall force and power, which they falsly attribute to them selues. The which is an euident signe, that they neuer knewe them selues nor the strength of their owne shoulders, in vaunting so of the weakenes and pouertie that is in them.

But for our partes, if we desier to be cladde with a righteousnes, which is able to stand before the face of God, and to appeare with assuraunce in his iudgement, let vs not seeke it in our selues, but let vs seeke it, and finde it, in the onely grace and mercie of our God. For (as S. Augustine sayeth) there is nothing within vs, that can please and contente him, but onely that, which he hath put in vs of his owne goodnesse.

Let vs not then follow these prowde spirites, which delight and contente them selues in nothing but in their own workes, & through a doting imagination accompting and esteeming them goodly and perfect, euen as apes do their younge ones: but contrarywise, let all that is in vs, and all that we do, displease vs, and let vs be the first iudges to condemne our selues and our workes, forasmuch as the meane to come to righteousnes, is to be able to approch with confidence, to the throne and iudge-

ment

ment seate of our God, and continually to saye with the holy Apostle: I knowe that I am carnall and soulde vnder sinne: by meanes whereof I can in no wise approue that which I doe. For I doe the euill which displeaseth me, and can not do the good I loue & desire to doe, certainelie, there is not in me, (that is to saye in my flesh) any good thinge. I see and feele continually in my members a law which fighteth against the lawe of my minde, and leadeth me captiue to the lawe of sinne which is in my members. *Rom.7.14.*

O how this confession ought throughly to beate downe the pride and arrogancie of those presumptuous ones, and stop vp the mouthes of all those that wilbe iustified by their owne workes and vertues! For it commeth from a vessell and instrument which God by spirituall fauour had chosen from among all the men of ỹ world, and who euen in those times of his ignoraunce liued in such sorte according to the righteousnes of the lawe, that he was blameleste and vnrebukeable towardes men. What a one then might he be (being regenerated, taken vp into the third heauen, where he had heard secretes, which it was not lawfull for him to vtter, & who had so greatly trauelled in the worke of the Lord to plante and to water his Church, 23.

A notable consideration vpon that Paule confesseth him selfe a miserable sinner.

2 Cor.12.1. 1.Cor.3.6. Galat.2.6. 2.Cor.11.5.

that therein he passed and farre out wente all his compagnions. And to conclude, he gaue place to none of them, neither in knowledge, nor in zeale, nor in high, and diuine meditations, nor in diligence, nor in vertues, nor in any other thing which was agreable to his vocatiõ, for his good and vpright walking therin. If then such a person did in such sorte and so much humble him selfe, what ought we to do after him?

An other example of the humilitie of Isaie, the excellẽt seruaunt of God.

Isaie 6. 6.

Isaye, whose mouth and tongue was cleansed by one of the Cherubins, & was sente from before the face of God for this purpose: who also had exercised his ministerie in the Church of God the space of three score yeares and more, and without ceasing day and night, was as a good watchman vpon the wall to discouer the comming of the enemies, to the ende that both him selfe, and those ouer whome he had charge might not be ouer taken through negligence: what sayth he of him selfe? and in what place and degree doth he put him selfe? Thou art (sayeth he to God) our Creatour and we are nothing but earth and dust. All our righteousnes is as filthie cloutes, and we are all faded as a leafe, and our iniquities haue caried vs as the winde: there is none that calleth vpon thy name, nor that stirreth vp him selfe to laye

Isaie 46. 8.

holde

holde vpon thee: For thou haſt hidde thy face from vs, and haſt conſumed vs becauſe of our iniquities. Ought not this confeſſion to make all the glorie and righteouſnes of theſe proude hypocrites, to bluſh for ſhame? Certainely the perfection which thoſe imagine, deſerueth not to be compared to the imperfection of thoſe excellent ſeruauntes of God, nor their phantaſticall riches and abondaunce to their pouerty. For aſmuch as the baſeſt golde, though it be rayed with ſome dirte, is alwayes more precious, then the brighteſt lead that a man can finde. Euen ſo the righteouſnes of a Chriſtian man, though it be defiled through many infirmities and imperfections, yet notwithſtanding is more to be eſteemed then all the righteouſneſſe of hypocrites and infidelles. *A ſimilitude againſt the righteouſneſſe of hypochrites*

There is nothing better, then for a man to humble himſelfe before God. Humilitie was the cauſe that the Caanitysh who was otherwiſe a dogge, became a faithfull woman, and that her faith was preferred, before the faith of all the people of God. Becauſe there is no better meane, to lifte vs vp, then to humble our ſelues: to be wiſe, then to repute our ſelues fooles: to be ſtrong, then to feele our one debilitie and weakenes. And this S. Auguſtin confirming, ſayeth, that all our ſtrength is in hu- *The fruite of Chriſtian humilitie.*

militie, and that there is nothing more weake and fraile then pryde and presumption. Forasmuch, as all prowd persons staye them selues, vpon their owne strength, that is, staye vpon a reede and vpō the ice of one nights fresing: and are like vnto smoke that mounteth vp on high, and so in going vp is scattered and commeth to nothing. But the humble man is as a rocke or a square body, which is alwayes steyed on which side soeuer it be turned, and there is no man (as sayeth that same good father) so harde to be healed, as he that thinketh him selfe to be hoale: forasmuch as he alwayes refuseth counsell of the phisition, and will take no remedies, nor keepe any good dyet or gouernment of him selfe, which shoulde be meete and healthfull for him. Euen so likewise there is no man farther of from the righteousnes of God, then he that hath some good opinion of him selfe. For such commonly are obstinate, and can not without great difficultie, be brought from the perswasion, which they haue conceaued of their owne righteousnes.

A similitude of the prowde and of the humble.

There is then no greater presumption nor more daungerous in the worlde, then this. For who soeuer presumeth so of his owne stength & vertue, & that he can of him selfe become wise, he maketh himselfe equal with God. For there is

Presumptiō very daungerous.

is none but God, which is of him selfe, and by nature wise, righteous, blessed and perfecte. Men are not otherwise wise, then by learning and instruction: nor righteous, but by grace: nor happie, but by the fruition and participation of the soueraigne good: If then a man wil depende vpon him selfe, and establish in himselfe the foundatiõs of felicitie and happynes, presuming that through the light & quickenes of his owne spirite, he can obtaine wisedome, and by the power of his owne will, righteousnes and by the contentation and delight which he hath of his owne vertues and actions, perfecte felicitie: certainly this man esteemeth himselfe to be like vnto God. But those persones that haue such an opiniõ, and presume so much of them selues, they are founde in the ende to come to shorte of their accompt: because it commeth to passe with them as it did to our fore fathers, who when they acknowledged not the honour which God had bestowed vpõ them, but went about to lifte vp them selues in an higher degree then he had sette them, they fell attonce headlonge, and became like vnto brute beastes: which thing happened to Nebucadnezar, who beinge become dronken and besides himselfe through the great victories and prosperities that he had gotten, thought to mounte vp to

Nebucadnezar punished for his pryde. Dan. 4. 22.

heauen and to make himselfe equall with God: but contrary to his expectation, to beate downe and breake the idle thoughts and discourses of his harte (no otherwise then happened to them that builded the tower of Babell) God hauing attonce discharged him of his aucthoritie, dignitie and mighte, together with the loue, obedience, feare, and fidelitie of his subiectes, freinds and seruaunts, in the end hauing made him like to wilde beastes, with whom he liued, and did eate, and drinke, as though they had bene his familiers and compagnions: he was taught by experience what it was, and the daũger therof for an earthly man to seeke to exalte himselfe, and to take vpõ him to be haile fellow
Exod.20.5. with God: forasmuch as he is geleous of his glorie, and can not at any hande abyde that his glorie shoulde be abased or diminished, without being kindled & prouoked to reuenge him selfe vpon all those whom he findeth guiltie of any such audacitie and rashenes. He woulde shew vs that we are bounde vnto God for all the good thinges we haue, and that we owe vnto him therin faith and homage, and principally for those spirituall giftes of our goodnes and felicitie: so as he wilbe accompted and confessed to be the chiefe cause and thauthour of that we are, afterwardes for this that we are good,

good, and to conclude for that we are blessed: and when so euer we will attribute any of these three thinges vnto our selues, or else referre that vnto any other then to him, he can not abyde it.

Alexander the Great hearing the rehearsall of the great victories and Conquestes which Philippe his father had gotten and made, was greiued, for that his father hauinge so brought into subiectiõ the whole countrey and brideled his enemies on euery side, already he tooke from him all hope of doinge any honorable or glorious thing: As he had borne himselfe in hande he woulde doe, it so fauling out that matter and occasion to employe himselfe, and his power failed him not. For this is the propertie of all valliant and noble Princes, to be agreiued when they loose opportunitie to make themselues esteemed and to win honour and renowen by their prowesse, and that they are constrained to rest them selues and be idle at home in their house, as cowardes miching and dastardes. In so much, as there is nothing that they are more gredie of, then the glorie and immortalitie of their names. Is it then any meruaill if God who is altogether perfect, and in whome a man can not reprehend any thing, or desire any thing, shoulde in such sort loue his

Alexander the Great an image of all ambitious princes.

glory: seeing that sinnefull men are so desirous of theirs, if once they thinke to haue any thing in them that is commendable. But as concerning vs, we maye not suffer our selues to be vainquished or ouermaistred of any such passion, which (as S. Augustine sayeth) is the worst guide, and most dangerous counsailour, that we can choose, to rule and gouerne our actions by. And it is impossible but that we shoulde obaye this passion, when we are once submitted vnto it, and become the sclaues thereof.

Wherefore that we may go safely, we must be mainteined in a simple humilitie, not lifting vp our heartes to hie, but in such wise taminge our appetites, that we be like to litle children that come from the nourse. They that goe the plaine waye, are not in so greate daunger to fall as they which go vpon the ridge of houses, or vppon the toppe of some highe mountaine: Euen so they that wilbe modest and haue no opinion of them selues, they goe a great deale more safely and surely, then they which haue a bigge hearte, and loftie lookes. For the waye that leadeth to life is straight. And so is the gate whereby a man must enter there. Wherefore if we will passe thereat, we must not be so bigge and puffed vppe with an opinion of our selues:

A similitude shewing the fruit of humility.

selues: but we must be leane and spare, and we must not esteeme more of our selues then we are worthe.

Philo the Iewe writeth that the cause why leauen was forbidden the Iewes, at the feast of the Passeouer was, to giue them to vnderstand that by this prohibition, they had to keep them selues from the daunger of pryde and presumption, into which they doe easely slide and fall, which haue any opinió of them selues, puffing vp themselues, therby as the dough is with the leauen. Wherefore it is very requisite that we take good heede, in all our workes, to followe that counsel which our Sauiour Christ giueth touching our almes: to witte, that our left hand know not what our right hand doeth. He would teach thereby, that we ought to be so vertuous, that our vertue be knowen to all the worlde, to the ende to edifie them which shall see it and knowe it: but of our selues it must not be knowen, for feare that we knowing it, it engender some presumption in vs, which might corrupte that foresaide vertue: like as the leauen sowreth the dough wherein it is mingled. But this ambition, as it is masked and disguised, so it knoweth very well howe to dissemble, and to flatter our appetites: so as we can hardly take heede to our selues, yea though

An allegorie of the leauen forbidden to the Iewes.

we studie the best we can, to be humble: forasmuch as it stealeth vnawares vppon vs, and shrowdeth it selfe secretely within our hearte, within which oftentimes it is founde or euer we wiste that it was entred. And this is the reason why S. Augustine sayeth, that all other sinnes are to be feared and fled indifferently of all persons: but the most perfect, and the best exercised and experienced in vertue ought principally to take heede of this rocke. For, as wormes engender soner in a softe and tender wodde, then in other that is more harde and knottie: and likewise as mothes do breede soner in fine woll, then in course flockes: euen so ambitiõ soner assaulteth an excellẽt and rare man in all kinde of vertue, then an other which is not so vertuous.

A similitude against ambition.

It is therefore verie needefull that we take good heede ẏ we be not sleapy, neither become slothfull, as it happened sometimes vnto Dauid, as himselfe confesseth, saying: when I was in prosperitie I thought I shoulde neuer be shaken: The Lord hauing in such sorte established me & vnderpropped me by his grace, so as I assured my selfe to be firme as the rocke: but assoone as he had turned away his coũtenaunce and taken his spirite from me, I was founde on the earth, and I beganne to know and feele

Psal. 30.7.

my

my feeblenes and infirmitie. It is conueniente therefore that we be vigilant to consider well all the meanes, and preuent all those wayes by which we maye be taken and deceaued. There be some which are like to those that tugge at the oare in a Galley. A man woulde iudge seeing their manner of doinge and howe they streatch their armes forward, that they would goe on and saile forthe right: when with all their might they enforce them selues to drawe backewardes: euen so being vaine glorious, they wil neuertheless perswade, that they haue nothing in greater detestatiō then vaine glorie: when there is not any thing whereof they are more desirous and gredye. Such in times past were the Pharisеis as are yet at this daye the Priests and Monkes of the Papacie, who haue their heartes swolne and puffed vp with ambition: which they cloke and coulour vnder the vizarde and outwarde shew of humilitie. These maye be resembled to Antisthenes, who on a time walked in the common place at Athens, with a cloke all to torne and tottred, to the end that euery one beholding him so apparailed, might iudge that he did it through humilitie, and not for lacke of goods, because he was a man wel esteemed and of good reputation. But Socrates hauing discouered by the readynes

A similitude against ambitious hypocrites.

To whome hypocrites may be resembled.

Antisthenes noted of hypocrisy by Socrates.

and ripenes of his good spirite and iudgement the hypocrisie of this philosopher, sayd all a lowde, that he sawe his ambition, through the hoales of his cloke. Diogenes also entring on a time into Plato his chamber, and seeing his bed very finely made (because being of a ciuile, and gentleman like nature, he was nete, in his moueables apparell, and gestures, and to be short, in all his conuersation) he went and wallowed him selfe like a swine vpon it, saying that he trampled downe Platoes pryde: but Plato aunswered readely, that this was done with a greater pride: whereby it maye appeare that there are many conterfaict humilities, seruing for no other purpose but to abuse the simple, who can not beware of them.

Plato noted of pride by Diogenes whom likewise he reproued for that offence

There be of them others, who hauing a certaine verball humilitie in mouthe, onely, saye they presume not any thing of them selues, and that they woulde they were as cleane from other sinnes as from that of ambition. And yet a man maye easely know by their fetches, the great desire and gredynes that they haue of honours, seeking all the wayes they can, to compasse them, and piteously tormentinge them selues, when they see they are frustrat of them. Adde hereunto, that they desire to be flattered, and are neuer so well contente as when they

Humilitie in wordes.

heare

heare themselues extolled, and there owne praises set out: contrarywise neuer so displeased, as when they see men hushte and saye nothing praiseworthy of them: or any manner of waye to obscure them: Wherein they discouer their notable hypochrisie, and shew euidently, that they are lyers, and accuse and condemne themselues: when they confesse that they are teinted with other sinnes, and yet will be free from this of ambition. For (as S. James sayeth:) He that sinneth in one point of the law, he is giltie of all. Which thing euery one may acknowledge in himselfe, if he will well examine the bottome, and secrets of his owne conscience, and consider by pecemeale all the circumstaunces of euery sinne. For as among the vertues there is such a chayne as entertaineth and embraceth each other, (as men that are in a roũde or that hold one an other by the hande) euen so among vices there is such a conspiratiõ as lightely they are neuer sondred one from the other. Whereupon we must think that we can not be giltie of any one vice but we must also in like manner be giltie of all the other. *Iames* 2.10.

These then be not those humilites, (being counterfait and bastardlike) that it becommeth vs to bring to the iudgement of God, to defende vs: forasmuch (as Dauid sayeth) that

the cause of all reprobates shall there be quite ouerthrowen, and all their actions condemned, being strange from God. But the true humilitie which God requireth, and which is necessarie, for to make vs appeare with confidence before his face, is a true knowledge which we ought to haue of our selues, and which engendreth in vs a true feeling of our vices and imperfections, and causeth vs to bewaile and lamente, to accuse and confesse them before God: and maketh vs alwaies ashamed and confounded before his maiestie: in such sort that when we appeare before him, we dare no more lifte vp our eyes to heauen, then that publicane: but looking downe to the earth we saye with him: Lorde be mercyfull to me poore and wretched sinner: and with Dauid: wash me O Lord from my iniquitie, & cleanse me from all my sinnes. Also as he sayeth else where: Enter not into iudgement with thy seruaunt: For no man liuing shalbe iustified in thy presence: and with Daniel: O Lord to thee belongeth righteousnes, and to vs shame and confusion: for we haue sinned, we haue committed iniquitie, we haue bene wicked and rebellious, and haue alwayes bene contrary to thy commaundementes and iudgementes.

Gregory the diuine.

Luc 18.14.

Psal. 54.4.

Psal. 143.2

Dan. 9. 5.7.

With such an humilitie and confession, we

maye

maye at all howers present our selues before God, and be assured that he will not reiecte vs from his presence: because (as Dauid sayeth) he neither despiseth nor reiecteth sorrowfull soules, hearts that are humbled and cast down, and penitent spirits. Isay sayeth: vpon whom shall the spirite of the Lorde rest, but vpon the humble, and vpon him that trembleth at his worde? S. Augustine sayeth: that men ioyne them selues and seeke out such as are their equales, and maye match them in greatnes, dignitie and riches: but contrarywise God who is the soueraigne in maiestie and highnes, he ioyneth him selfe to none, but to those that are humble and lowly in their owne sight.

Psa. 51. 19.

Isai 66. 2.

S. Augustin.

Like will to his like.

Let vs conclude then that there is nothing so necessary and expediente, as to humble and throw downe our selues, as hath bene said. We see that reedes and young osyers, which bowe and yeelde to the wind, abide stable for the time of the tempest, where as the greate trees that seeme to be so strong and so wel rooted, can not resiste the violence and force of a great winde, so as many times they are blowen downe, shiuered and rooted vp by the rootes: euen so there is none loste, condemned, destroyed and ouerthrowen in the iudgement of God: but he that will be there compted good, and will defende

The cõclusiõ touching Christiã humilitie.

A similitude.

him selfe there with the vertue & strength of his own righteousnes. For this is as a great thunder, that neuer putteth forth his might but against thinges of resistaunce: but against any heape of earth, or against a wolle packe, or some such other flexible & yeelding substaunce, the blow is broken and it streight waies dyeth. It is a great reproch and shame amongest men for a man to breake and become bankeroute for worldly goods: but before God it is a great glorie and honour, and we know not how to do any thing more profitable and honorable for vs, then (as a man woulde saye) to laye the keyes vnder the dore, and to forsake all, confessing that we haue no meane to paye, & to discharge our selues towardes his righteousnes. We had neede in this case to be like couetous men, who alwayes thinke that they are poore, how great substaunce soeuer they haue, because they haue more regard to that they desire, thē to that they haue. Moreouer, they thinke alwayes (as the Poete sayeth) that their neighbours vineyeard & feelde is goodlier & more fructful then theirs. We in like maner considering both our selues, and the whole estate of our life, shall finde that that which is maymed and wantinge in vs, is more then that which either we haue or canne haue heere in this worlde. Let vs not thinke there-

Similitudes shewinge what the thoughts of the faithful ought to be when they present thē selues before God.

therefore to be rich before God, or that our neighbors are poorer then we, as the Pharisie thought and saide: but let vs be certaine and resolued in this opinion, that before God we haue not any thing wherof we make sure accompt: neither righteousnes nor wisedom: nor vertue, that we may set out or alledge before his iudgment. And touching our neigbours we must alwayes thinke, that we haue so litle, that we maye not dare preferre or compare our selues to any of them.

The second point shewing that we must finde though not in our selues, a perfect righteousnes that maye stand before God: & in what that righteousnes consisteth.

Nowe being thus prepared to presente our selues before God, to witte, through a right knowledge of our selues, through an inwarde feeling of our vices and corruptions, and by an humble confession of our errours and imperfections, it is meete yet to seeke out a righteousnes, that we maye bring it out there, and such a one as is not onely sufficient to susteine the rigour and severitie of that iudgement: but also to obteine full forgiuenes and iustification of all sinnes and offences, and of all accusations which our aduersaries can allege there against vs: which we can not finde in our selues, nor in any mortall man as we haue shewed and declared before. For all haue gone astraye, and are of thē selues abominable before God, there is not one that doth good no not one. Noah was

Psal.14.1. Rom.3.12.

Gene.9.21.

Numb. 20. 24. drunke: Moses murmured at the waters of Miribah: Abraham was an Idolatrer: Dauid *Iosua* 24.2. a murtherer and adulterer: S. Paule a perse- *2.Sam.*11.4 cutour of the Church: S. Peter denied Iesus *1.Tim.*1.13 Christ: S. John with his brother James, and *Iohn* 18.25 the other Apostles were ambitious. To con- *Mat.*20.20 clude, there was not any among all the fathers *Luc* 22.24. and Saincte, that haue bene since the foun- dacion of the world, to whome it hath not come to passe to committe some one notable faulte or other in their life time, & who not continually acknowledged his great sinnes, as occasiō hath *1.Cor.*1.29. bene offred vnto him. So as no flesh hath wher- of to boaste it selfe or to glorie before God, who hath shute all men vnder sinne and infide- *Rom.*11.32. lity, to the ende, that he may haue mercy on all, and that euery one may acknowledge and con- fesse, that his saluation in and through all, con- sisteth in the onely grace and mercie of God.

Our righ- teousnes is in Christ Ie- sus alone.

We must not therefore thinke to finde the righteousnesse that we seeke after, any where else, then in Iesus Christ, of whome Ieremie sayeth: his name is called the eternall, our *1.Cor.*1.30. Righteousnes. S. Paule sayeth, agreably to the Prophete, that he was made our Righte- ousnes, wisedome, sanctification and Redemp- *Rom.*5.19. tion. And else where he sayeth: that as by one mans disobedience, many became sinners: so

by

by the obedience of an other many shal become righteous. To what tendeth all that which is spoken of him in the scripture? to witte, that he hath payed our debtes: that by him we are reconciled to God his father: that he hath obteyned for vs remission of our sinnes: that he is our resurrection and our life, and our intercessour to the father, that by his death and sacrifice, he hath pacified the wrath of his father against vs: that he hath washed vs in his bloud: and by an infinit nomber of other excellent sentences that are sette out vnto vs, and tende to no other ende, but to make vs know and to perswade vs, that there is no other but he alone who is our righteousnes, and the meane of our saluation and of our life.

Isai 53.4.
Coloss.1.20.
2.Cor.5.19.
Iohn 11.25
1.Tim.2.5.
Isay 53.5.
Apoc.1.6.

It is not then the lawe, nor any other ceremonies or sacrifices of goates, sheepe, oxen and lambes, nor yet any workes and vertues that can iustifie vs before God: but the onely bloude of Iesus Christ, through which his testament and newe couenaunt which he hath made with vs, is passed, accorded, sealed and ratified. All thinges (sayeth he) are giuen vnto me of God my father. If we then will haue all that is necessarie for our happynesse, as the fauour of God, righteousnes, life, light, the forgiuenes of our sinnes, and the holy spirit to regenerate

Heb.9.10.
Tit.3.5.
Mat.11.27.

and sanctifie vs: we must addresse our selues to Christ, forasmuch as it is he, whom the father hath chosen to be Treasureour and steward of all his graces. Moses by whom the law was published and deliuered to the people, conducted them safely through the deserte: but he brought them not to the place of their rest: For that was Iosue, who was a figure of Iesus Christ, who made them passe ouer Iordaine, to establish them in that possession and inheritaunce which God had promised vnto their fathers.

Iohn 6.27.

Iosu 1. 6.

The effecte of the lawe towarde the faithfull. Similitudes

The lawe therefore maye well leade vs and teach vs the way that we must take and walke in the middest of the darkenes and wildernes of this world, like as some marke by the waye sides, maye well direct vs, and shew vs which waye to take: but the lawe can not giue vs strength and courage to goe through, if we be wery, neither enable vs to come to the place whither we goe. Likewise the lawe can not bring vs to that rest, which God hath promised vnto his elect: nor any other, but our great Iosue, that is to say, Iesus Christ our Lord, who onely can doe it, by his righteousnes. Therefore S. Augustin sayed very well, it is very necessary that we dayly lifte vp our eyes on high, to beholde that Serpent hanging deade on the Crosse,

Heb. 4. 8.

S. Augustin vppon S. Iohn.

Crosse, to the ende we maye be preserued from the venome and bytinge of that serpent that is aliue and raigning yet in the worlde. And in an other place he sayeth: this is the waye in which we must walke, and the truth vpõ which we must rest, & the path in which we must go.

When then we are once marching towards him, we ought not to feare but that going on in this waye, and continuing therein, we shall come in the ende to the goale and to the felicitie, whither we bende our selues. Forasmuch as this is a sure waye which can not be stopped nor layd with theeues, nor drowned with any showers or flowdes of waters. Moreouer, it is plaine and streight and hath neither rockes nor blockes or any other lettes which maye make vs stomble. It remayneth only then that when we are in this waye, we keepe our selues there without standing still, or going backewards, or turning aside either to the right hand or the left: because we can no soner leaue it, nor departe in any other manner, but by and by we goe astraye, and are laide open to all kinde of daungers: Euen like as in winter we can no sooner be from the fier, but we are a colde, nor out of light but we enter into darkenes: euen so we can no soner be parted frõ Iesus Christ, who is our righteousnes & our life, but streight

Christ is only the waye the truth & life.

Similitudes.

waye we are in sinne and in death: forasmuch as he is the life that quickeneth vs, the Sunne that giueth vs light, and the fier that warmeth, comforteth and refresheth all his members. As the mone hath no light but that it hath from the Sunne, and as that light is litle or great, as it is neare or farre of, in such sort that if it departe from it, it remayneth altogether obscure and darke: Euen so in like manner the Church hath no light, righteousnes, life, helth, strength, and happynes, but that, which it hath pleased her husband Iesus Christ to giue vnto her, because of that vnion and fellowshippe, which he hath with her. Wherefore if at any time she be separated from him, and that there be a diuorse between her and her husband, there remayneth to her nothinge but darkenes, vice and wretchednesse.

Gen.2.23. Ephes.5.30

The regeneration of the church.

Eue in the beginning was created of the flesh, bone, and bloude of her husband: euen so the Church is regenerated by the participatiõ that she hath with the fleshe of Iesus Christ, through the sacrificing whereof she was redeemed, washed & purged from all filthynes in his bloude, and through the participation of his bones was fortified and mainteyned against all tentation. For he who in the beginning was the aucthour of our life, he is likewise now the aucthour

aucthour of our good life. And we must not thinke that there are two diuerse beginninges of our being and righteousnes. For he himselfe that hath made vs mẽ, hath also made vs Christians: and as in the beginning he created vs and made vs of nothing: euen so afterwardes, he regenerated vs, being nothing, but vanitie, the children of wrath and maledictiõ: and when we were worse then nothing he chose vs and that before we were conceaued and borne: he hath called vs when as rebellious seruauntes to maisters, we fledde from him: when we turned our backes to him: he iustified vs being sinners, sanctified vs being prophane and polluted, raised vs vp being deade: And will also glorifie vs although we be yet altogether couered with ignominie and corruption: wherupon a man maye inferre that, which S. Cyprian sayeth is verie true: that in our saluation we must glorie in nothing. For there is not any thing of ours, and which we shoulde not confesse to be wholly from God. *S. Cyprian.*

If we will examine this throughly, and consider it in euery part, we shall confesse the truth, what soeuer the schoolemen prate & bable, that of our selues we can dispose our selues to receaue our saluatiõ when soeuer God offreth it vnto vs. It is so farre of that it can be true, that *The confutation of their errour which saye that it is in our owne power so die*

Apose our selues to receaue our saluation, when God offereth it vnto vs.

quite contrary we are thē wholly turned away, and resist against it with all our power. Which thing may plainely appeare by the example of S. Paule, who was called and ledde by Jesus Christ, as it were by strong hande to his sheep folde, euen then, when he was going to Damascus, being carried with a deadely hatred, and enflamed with furie to persecute and vtterly to roote out (if he coulde) the memorie of his name. There is nothinge more certaine, then that S. Augustine sayth that all they that labour and sweate vnder the heauie burden of this flesh, and complaine of this miserable life, they haue but one onely consolation and hope, that is to saye, that Jesus Christ is their Mediatour & their righteousnes. By reason wherof whē he made his entraunce into the middest of Jerusalem, all that wente before and behind him cryed out with one voice, Hosanna, &c. that is to saye: Saue vs O sonne of Dauid our Sauiour. To the end to shew that there was neuer good man neither before nor after his comming which did hope to be saued by any other meanes, then onely through his righteousnes and obedience. And therefore S. Augustine sayeth, that all the Sainctes, since Abell vnto John Baptiste, and after the Apostles, vnto the ende of the worlde ought not to be prai-

Acte 9.5.

S. Augustin

S. Augustin

sed

ſed but in him, and not in them ſelues. In ſo much that the firſt haue ſayde, My ſoule ſhall reioyce in the Lorde: and thoſe that came after haue ſayed in like manner: By grace I am that I am: and all in generall ſaye: That whoſoeuer will glorie he muſt glorie in God. *Pſal.* 34.3. 1. *Cor.* 15. 10.

And in verie truth this is he that hath borne the wooll and the fleece, of which was ſponne this cloth, wherewith we muſt be clad, that we may be ſhrowded againſt heats, cold, and other iniuries of heauen. All you (ſayeth the Apoſtle) which are baptiſed in Chriſt, haue put on Chriſt. This is that kinge, who for the adorning of the Queene his ſpouſe hath made for her riche and ſumptuous robes, as the Pſalmiſt ſayeth: Which thinge Ezechiell ſheweth alſo more clearly: I haue waſhed thee with water, yea I haue waſhed away thy bloud from thee, in which thou waſt altogether polluted: I haue anoynted thee with oyle, and clothed thee alſo with broyderd worke, and haue ſette a crowne of Golde vpon thy heade: and I haue decked thee with golde and ſiluer, that thou mighteſt be very bewtifull. All that ſame long Alegorie, which he vſeth there in the 16. of his prophesie, is to no other ende, but to extoll the righteouſnes of Jeſus Chriſt, with which the Church is apparailed and adorned: with thoſe *The perfection and righteouſnes of Ieſus Chriſt.* *Gal.* 3.27. *Pſal.* 45.14 *Ezec.* 16.9.

other precious giftes, graces and blessinges, wherewith she is altogether couered and replenished. And as there is nothing, more vncleane then she, when she is naked: so is there nothing more bewtifull then she, when she is decked in the liuerie and collour of her husband. For then hath she a speciall grace, that makes her verie amiable, delightfull, and in passing good liking to God him selfe: Moreouer, being so clothed in this robe of innocencie, all that was foule in her, and which disfigured her, is in such sorte couered and defaced, that there appeareth no more vncleanes in any part of her, because Jesus Christ (as S. Augustine sayeth) is as a spounge which wipeth vs & cleanseth vs from all our filthynes, which he taketh in exchaunge for the bewtie, righteousnesse, and perfection, which he communicateth vnto vs: Wherin we ought to acknowledge and to adore this great and incomparable loue which he beareth vs, and which he hath truely and in effect shewed vnto vs, heaping vpon vs at the daye of our mariage so great and precious ioyes: although he receaue nothing of vs in dowrie, but olde baggage altogether couered with thicke and filthie dirte: to witte, euen our imperfections and iniquities.

We receaue then, in doing this thinge two great

great commodities of his righteousnes, which serue vs for two purposes: to witte first to draw vs out from the mier and claye wherein we were buried: to decke vs with goodly robes wherewith we are clad to make vs bewtifull: that is to saye, to deliuer vs from the malediction and curse, wherinto we were fallen: and then on the other side to blesse vs and to bring vs into fauour with God his father, to drawe vs backe from pouertie, and to enrich vs: to raise vs vp from death, and to giue vs life: to drawe vs from hell, and to make vs mounte vp into heauen. Even as Iesus Christ on the one part hath deliuered vs from feare, terrour and torment of conscience, sparring and shutting vp hell gates: so on the other he hath set vs in a certaine and vndoubted hope of euerlasting life, and of a blessed reste, opening his paradise vnto vs. This is that, which is sayde of him in the scripture: that he keepeth the keyes of death and of life: the one, to make fast and shut vp the gate, which was alwayes open to swallow vs vp and deuour vs: and the other, to open vnto vs the kingdome of heauen, which was alwayes locked and shutte against vs. By meane whereof at his death the vaile that let the entraunce into the Sanctuary was broken and cleste into two partes: to the ende that that way

Christ deliuereth vs from death, and giueth vs eternall life.

Apoc. 1. 18.

Mat. 27. 51.

might be made open for vs, and that euery one might haue a meane and libertie to come vnto God, and to presente them selues before him with confidence. This is the cause that Paule
Heb.9.10. writing to the Hebrewes sayed: that by his flesh he hath prepared a waye for vs to heauen, to attaine vnto life. Forasmuch as he hath in that flesh rendred vnto God for vs perfect obediẽce: and by his death hath satisfied his righteousnes for our sinnes, obtayning for vs by this meanes, the forgiuenes of our sinnes, and through this remission righteousnes, and by righteousnes the grace and fauour of God, and by Grace, life: in such sort as we maye nowe presente our
Isay 33.14. selues to him in all assuraunce: who before was as a consuming fire, to consume vs and bring vs to nothing &c: but now by the meanes of Iesus Christ is a shadowe to releiue and refreshe vs againe.

By Iesus Christ alone we haue accesse vnto God the father.

This is the reason for which Iesus Christ was figured by the ladder which Iacob sawe when he sleept, wherevpon the glorie of God
Gen.28.12. rested it selfe. Forasmuch as in the humanitie of Christ dwelled the fulnesse of the Diuinitie
Coloss.2.9. bodely, because by it God descendeth downe vnto vs: Euen as Iesus Christ hauing taken our humanitie, was called Emmanuel, which is
Isai 7.8. asmuch to saye as God is with vs, so also we

through

through him mounte vp as it were by degrees to heauen, where our conuersation is, & wherof at this day we are Citizens & of the householde of God. Being then very God and very man of two diuerse natures, the one diuine and the other humaine, which are conioyned and vnited together inseparablie, without any confusion or diuision: in that he is God, we must goe vnto him to be in saftie, and to liue happely: and on the other side in that he is mã, he is the way by which we must march on to attaine to euerlasting life. So thẽ we must go to Iesus Christ that is God, by Iesus Christ that is man, by the worde that is made flesh, to the word which was in the beginning with God, and by the breade which men eate vnto the breade which Angells eate.

Mat.1.23.
Philip. 3. 20.
Ephes.2.19.
S. Augustin

And there is no neede that we seeke for any other but him, whether it be to reste our selues in, or to leade and directe vs thither. For being God, he is the soueraigne God, and the ende whereunto all our appetites and desires ought to be directed. And when we are come thither, there is the place where we must rest and altogether repose our selues: forasmuch as he is perfect and replenished with all vertue & righteousnes, which he communicateth vnto vs, by meanes of that communion and fellowship that

All our felicitie consisteth in Christ alone

we haue with him. To conclude then, he is the waye that must leade vs to our felicitie, and the only meane to make vs attaine thither. When we are washed with his bloude, this is it that preserueth vs from that destroyer, this is the cloude that shrowdeth vs from being burned & consumed with the extreme heat of the wrath of God, and the libertie whereinto we must retire from the furie of the enemy that pursueth so harde after vs. To be shorte, this is the gate of saluation and the hauen where we must harborre and saue our selues in the time of tempeste.

We obtain throughe Christ the blessing of God.

Gen.27.19.

Exod.28.2.

This is the cloke vnder which we maye obtaine the blessing of God, as Iacob obtayned that of his father Isaake, being disguised with the apparell of his elder brother Esau. And as the high Priest neuer appeared before the face of God, without his holy embroidred garmẽts, his Ephod, his robe, and his other priestly apparell, without which he coulde not fynde any fauour when he appeared in his presence: Euen so (to follow the truth of this figure) we ought neuer to presente our selues before God (if we will be accepted and receaued of him,) but we must be clothed and decked with the righteousnes and innocencie of his sonne: wherwith if we be once couered, we neede not feare that

we

we shall be reiected and despised of him, or that there is any enemy whosoeuer he be, that hath any power to hurte vs. For such armour can defende vs euen from the wrath of God it selfe, against which no other thing can resiste.

It is written that Alexander hauing conceaued a great hatred against the cittie of Ierusalem, was fully resolued vtterly to destroye it, because that laying seidge to the cittie of Tyr the inhabitauntes of Ierusalem had refused to helpe him with victuals and other munition which he had demaunded of them. Nowe after that he had taken Tyr, he marched forth with all his armie against Ierusalem, with full purpose vtterly to destroy it. The which thing whē the highe Priest named Iaddus vnderstood, he apparailed him selfe with the holy garmentes of the highe Priest, and so presented him selfe before Alexāder, who vpon the suddaine, when he sawe him in this habite, alighted from his horse, and bowed his knees before Iaddus, and reuerenced him, and shewed him great honours, and great loue to the countrey, and gaue great giftes to the temple. Nowe if an enemy so furious and terrible were so suddainly appeased, at the onely sight of this highe Priest so apparailed (who was but a figure of Iesus Christ:) what shall it be when Iesus Christ

Ioseph lib. 11. de antiqui. Indaic. cap. 8.

shal appeare in his glorie and all his members with him, clad and couered with his righteousnes, and shewing them selues to all the worlde, in such and so magnificall and glorious apparaill? Shall not the deuills and hell bowe their knees then for feare when they shall see him in his maiestie and in such excellent glorie?

Let vs conclude then that beinge garnished and couered with the righteousnes of Iesus Christ, we can haue no lacke of strength and might to vanquish and ouercome our enemies, nor of any other thing that may make vs perfectly happy what soeuer. As S. Ambrose writeth verie elegantly, in his seconde booke of Virginitie, that Iesus Christ is vnto vs, all in all things: If we be sicke, he is our phisition: If we haue an Ague, and that we are altered, he is our fountaine: If we be laden with iniquitie, he is our righteousnes: If we be weake and werped, he is our strength: If we feare death, he is our life: If we desire to mounte vp to heauen, he is our ladder: If we haue vpne darkenes, he is our light: If we haue houngred, he is our breade and nourishment. Wherupon we may perceaue and knowe the great riches and commodities that Iesus Christ bringeth vnto all them that possesse him.

S. Ambrose.

Now hauing shewed that there is no other righte-

righteousnes, but the righteousnes of Christ, which can be sufficient to beare the rigour of the iudgement of God, and that maye enable vs to appeare and aunswere there: it remayneth now that we declare vpon what matter it worketh and where it resteth & dwelleth: how it maye be obtayned: and in what sort a man maye assure him selfe of it: finally, hauinge obteyned it, what fruits it bringeth forth in vs.

The third point shewing in whom the iustice of God is, and howe a man maye obtaine it.

First the righteousnes of Christ hath two principall partes, to witte Iustification, and Sanctification, that is to saye: when it is communicated vnto vs, although that before we were the wickedest in the worlde, and guiltie of death before God, and moreouer, that our nature was altogether corrupted and teynted in euery parte of it: notwithstanding all this, we are holden and reputed for righteous before God, and are allowed and receaued of him for his children and heires, when we are prouided of this righteousnes, and when we are clothed with it, he giueth vs his holy spirite, to leade vs and conducte vs (as a schoolmaister doth his children) and for to sanctifie, instructe and strengthen vs in all his wayes. And that this is true, S. Paule writeth, not onely that it was sayde of Abraham that his faith was counted to him for righteousnes: but also that

The righteousnes of Christ hath two partes.

How we are iustified.

Rom. 4. 22.

we shalbe accompted righteous before God, as he was, if we beleue in Iesus Christ: Also,

2. Cor. 5. 19. God was in Christ and reconciled the worlde to himselfe, not imputinge their sinnes vnto them. And ioyning both these partes together in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, he sayed to them speakinge of their life, that they had bene altogether led in wickednes, and were dissolute in all kinde of mischeefe: but that they

1. Cor. 6. 11. were now washed, iustified and sanctified in the name of Iesus Christ, and through the spirite of God.

We are iustified and sanctified by the righteousnes & holynes of Christ.

Now if we will know by what meane this is done, we must note, that being vnited by faith in our Lorde Iesus Christ, and graffed in him, (as members in their body,) that he is then become our heade, and we are ioyned to him as the housbande to his wife. By meanes whereof he chargeth him selfe with all our debtes, and appointeth him selfe to be the aunswere and pledge for vs, to the ende he maye paye all for vs and throughly acquite vs of all, that we are indebted and bounde for, offring him selfe to satisfie the righteousnes of God, by his owne death, to the which death we were

The first reason.

Galat. 3. 13 bounde by reason of our sinnes: and to deliuer vs by his Crosse, from the curse, to which we were likewise subiect, for hauing disobeyed

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the will of God, and broken his lawe, in a thousand and a thousandes thinges: he hath also rased out our disobedience, by his obediēce, which being so perfect & accomplished in all pointes, he hath supplied and made amendes for all our faultes and imperfections, and for the dutie wherewith we were bounde to God with all our might, being his creatures, children and seruaunts. The death then which Iesus Christ hath suffred, the sacrifice which he hath offred, the curse which he hath borne, & the obedience that he hath rendred: all this was done in our name, and for our discharge, and is receaued before the iudgemēt of God, for acquitall in ful payment and discharge of all our debtes, in such sort that no more can be demaūded againe of vs, he hauing through his innocencie fully satisfied that promise which he had made for vs. Beholde the first reason, why the righteousnes of Iesus Christ is imputed vnto vs and accepted of God in his iudgement. *Rom.5.19.*

The second reason is, that being knitte and vnited together by mariage, both we and he are but one body and one flesh: and there is a mutuall communion between vs. And as he participateth with our afflictions, miseries, poucrties and infirmities, so when we are persecuted by tyrans, he complaineth with vs and lamen- *2.Reason. Ephe.5.30.*

teth our aduersities and sorrowes, likewise, when we are houngry, sicke, diseased, in prison, &c. he beareth and endureth all our calamities with vs. We also on the contrary part are partakers of all his benefites, graces and giftes which his father hath bestowed vpon him: and in generall, of all that he hath done and suffred for our saluation and redemption: we are anointed, as he was, with the oyle of his holy spirite: we are deade and buried with him, and we are raised vp and caried into heauē with him where we are sette at the right hande of God his father, as he is. We are inheritours together with him, and we haue part in his glorie, in his rest & in all his felicity, by meane of his righteousnes, obedience & innocencie, of all which through his grace we are made partakers. Also, of his death, sacrifice and satisfaction. And to conclude, as marchantes which are of one companie & become parteners, are partakers alike of all the profites and damages which growe of their marchandise: euen so Iesus Christ, by reason of that societie we haue together with him, giueth vs a parte, and we likewise giue him, of all that we haue and possesse. The difference that is in this, is, that the gaines & losses, that come of the traffique that is exercised amongest men is equall and common

Rom. 6. 4.
Coloss. 3. 1.
Ephe. 2. 22.
Rom. 8. 17.
A similitude.

mon amongest them all, but here we gather vp all the fruites that arise of the righteousnes of Jesus Christ: he on the contrary parte taketh vpon him, and chargeth himselfe with all the damages and losses that came of our disobedience.

The third reason, for which the righteousnes of Christ is imputed vnto vs, is, that being knitte to him, as the members of a bodie are to their heade (the which, by meanes of this coniunction receaue thence one influence which giueth them life, and distributeth to each their motions & senses according as is fitte for their nature, and as is requisite for their actions) we receaue from him as S. Paule sayeth, our life, our nourishment, our grouth, our force and strength: for the enabling and disposing of vs to doe those good workes that belong vnto our vocation. And by reason of this coniunction there is such an vnion betwixt him and vs, that as he communicateth with vs in our afflictiõs: so we likewise on the other side communicate with him, in his riches: we are righteous by his righteousnes, we are acquited by his satisfaction, we are quickened to life by his death, and obaye God through his obedience. And euen as in a naturall body, the power that the eye hath to see, serueth more to ẏ vse of the other

3. Reason. Ephes. 1. 2.

A similitude.

members then for it selfe because that seeing and marking them all it is watchfull rightly to guide them and to direct euery one of their actions, not being able in the meane time to see them selues, nor to serue it selfe: euen so the righteousnes, innocencie & obedience of Christ Jesus, stande vs in more sted then him, seeing that notwithstanding he had all these thinges, and it was in his nature, life, and whole conuersation absolut and perfect, yet for all this, he was condemned and crucified. We on the contrary part albeit his righteousnes, innocencie, and obedience be onely imputed vnto vs, yet for all that, by meanes of this imputation we are absolued, iustified and discharged of all our sinnes, and of all accusations that all our enemies can bring against vs.

The 2. part of the righteousnes of Christ.

2. Cor. 6. 14.

The other part of the righteousnes of Jesus Christ consisteth in the sanctification not only of vs but also of our works. For although that there is not (as Paule sayth) any fellowshippe between righteousnes and vnrighteousnes, between light and darkenes, between the temple of God and Idolls: yet for all this, whē Jesus Christ will ioyne vs with him selfe, and will choose vs and consecrate vs, to the ende to dwell in vs, as in his temple: he sanctifieth vs

S. Augustin first by his spirit & prepareth the house where he

he will dwell. And because it is ouer streight to entertaine so great a lorde, he enlargeth it: and whereas it is olde and ruinous, he repayreth it and buildeth it newe againe: whereas it is stincking and full of filthe, he sweepeth and clenseth it. And to be briefe, where as it is naked and vnfurnished, he furnisheth and decketh it. And euen as, when he woulde be borne of the Virgin Marie, and before he woulde be lodged in her wombe, he sent his seruauntes before him, that is to saye, his spirite, to the ende to take it vp for him and to sette his marke there: so also when he wilbe conceaued in our hartes, and be borne of vs, he prepareth and regenerateth vs before, sanctifying the place where he will make his abode.

Now this sanctification consisteth in fower pointes. The first is, that we feele and confesse our sinnes, and that we accuse, condemne, and detest our selues before God as miserable and accursed in all pointes. The second is, that we haue a setled zeale and feruent affection to the studie and exercise of good workes, searching out, with all diligence, all the meanes & wayes to applie our selues to good: and shuming on the contrary, all the thinges that maye turne vs awaye from it. The third is, that we fight couragiously against all the desiers and concu-

The sanctification of the faithful consisteth in 4. points.

1. *Hatred & detestation of euil.*
2. *A loue and endeuor to good.*
3. *Resistãce against temptations.*

piscences of our flesh, and that we be strong and resolued against all the other tentations of the deuill and the worlde, whether it be that we are sweetly enticed or flattered thereunto, or violently drawen and enforced. And that we be not colde and white lyuered in these combats, but hardy, vigilant, and attentiue to espie and to take all occasions, whereby we maye resiste, and vanquish all our enemies. The fourth is, that as we continually sinne, so we also as often diligently praye vnto God, that it will please him of his great mercy to pardon our offences. And as the people of Israell, going through the deserts, had to fight oftentimes against the serpents, and when they were stonge and smitten by them, for to be preserued from the venim and from death, they lifted vp their eyes toward the brasen serpente that Moises had set vp amiddest their tentes, by sight whereof they were healed: we in like maner fighting against our concupiscences, if it come to passe at any time that they giue vs any blowe, to the ende that this stripe may not be deadely vnto vs, we must lifte vp our eyes towardes Iesus Christ hanging vpon the Crosse, and beseech him that he woulde forgiue vs all our trespasses.

4. Cõtinuall inuocation for Gods fauour.

What it is, to applie

Now when it is sayd that to shewe our sanctification by the effecte we must applie our selues

selues to good workes, it maye not be vnder- *a mãs selfe*
stand that it is enough to exercise our selues in *to good*
one or in two, leauing the rest behinde: as ma- *workes.*
ny doe, who doe not take nor vse the worde of
God, but in that only where it is agreable and
maie be referred (they thinke) to their appe-
tite: but it is needfull to embrace it wholie, and
not to thinke that we can doe our dutie in any
sorte whatsoeuer, vnlesse we enforce our selues
to keepe all the commaundementes of God,
without omitting the least point or title therof.
Euen like as to be healthie in our bodyes, it is *A simili-*
not enough, not to haue the plague or a pleure- *tude.*
sie, but generally to be free from all diseases:
euen so to be holy in our soules, we must be
cleane from all spottes and defylinges: and we
must take the whole lawe of God, as an vniuer-
sall rule of all our thoughts, affections, wordes
and deedes, to the ende to keepe it from point
to point, and not to omitte any thing which is
there commaunded vs. And what would it pro- *A simili-*
fite in a cittie, diligently to watch at one gate *tude.*
and to keep it shutte against the enemye, if in
meane while all the reste stood wide open to
him? euen so likewise it is to no purpose to keep
our selues from one vice, vnlesse we make ac-
compt, and conscience to abondon our selues
from all others: like as amongest archers (as

sayeth Aristotle) there is but one onely marke whereto they must direct their arrowes to shoot well, and yet many meanes to misse and shoote short: so is there but one onelie holynes, whervnto we must aspire, which is a setled desier, fully resolued wholly to obaye God. But there are many kinds of vices and meanes to disobey him, and to withstand his will. We conclude then, that to be applied to good workes, it must not be done to halues, but perfectly & without exception to take care and indeuour to keep all that God commaundeth.

Of the perfection of workes.

But here a question must be resolued, and that is: that if to doe our dutie, and to satisfie the will of God, we must be perfect in euery kinde of vertue. And we can not otherwise be Sainctes and Christians, vnlesse we haue in perfection all the points of holynes. The Philosophers and schoolemen, they say that this is necessarie, and that a man can not be sayd to be vertuous vnlesse he haue attained to the fulnes and perfection of all vertues: But the scriptures & the auncient fathers they speake otherwise. For S. Paule sayeth, that the minde is accepted according to that it hath: that is to saye, that we are accepted of God when we employe that portion and measure of power and strength which he hath giuen vnto vs to the ende

The opiniõ of the philosophers & schoolemen.

Sentẽces of the scriptures and auncient doctours.

2. Cor. 8. 12.

ende to do well, and he is contented with that, although we lagge somewhat behinde, and in a great sorte of thinges come verie shorte of that ende and perfection, which is propounded and set out vnto vs in the lawe. And the selfesame Apostle confesseth, that he had nothing, but that same onely will: To will is present with me (sayeth he:) but I finde no meane to performe that which is good. Abraham sacrificed his sonne, no otherwise then in effect, & he had nothing but the same will which was imputed vnto him, as if he had accomplished all that was commaunded him. So as God him selfe witnesseth of him, saying: Forasmuch as thou hast done this thinge, and to obaye me hast not spared thine onely sonne, I will blesse thee and multiplie thy seede, as the starres of heauen. Iesus Christ shal say vnto his elect, which shall be on his right hande in the daye of iudgement: Come ye blessed of my father: inherite ye the kingdom prepared for you before the foundacion of the worlde. Forasmuch as when I was houngry ye gaue me meate, &c. This is certaine that among the elect, there was some who being holden in pouertie, or for lacke of ability, or by some other let, did not that, which Christ shall saye there they did, which thinges themselues cõfesse not to haue done in the same

Rom. 7. 18.

Gen. 22. 16.

Mat. 25. 34

place alleaged: And yet for all this, it shalbe sayde vnto all, not because all haue done those things, but because they had a will to do them. Moreouer, if in respect of vice, the will onely be enough to conuince and condemne a man, and that he is accompted an adulterer before the iudgement of God, who hath onely looked on his neighbours wife to lust after her: and that he is also reputed a manqueller, that hateth his brother: euen so likewise in respect of good workes we must not doubte but the good wil, and desire we haue to performe them is accepted and approued of God though alwayes the effectes follow not so soone and so excellent as we desire.

S. Ambrose. As touching the auncient fathers, they saye the selfe same thinge. S. Ambrose vppon S. Luke, affirmeth that ỳ righteousnes of a Christian man consisteth more in the will, then in the worke, and that it ought rather be measured by the affection then by the effect. But in the booke which he hath written De fuga mundi, he sayeth, it is a harde thing for one to keepe himselfe wholly from vanitie, and that it is impossible altogether to depart from it, otherwise

S. Augustin then in will and desire alone. S. Augustine vpon the first Epistle of John sayeth: that the whole life of a Christian is no other thing but

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an holy desire and good will: And in his 9. booke of the Trinitie, he hath a saying seruing to this purpose worthy to be noted: He (sayeth he) that knoweth righteousnes and loueth it perfectly, that man is righteous, notwithstanding that outwardly he hath not yet shewed by his workes, in any sort, that good affection of his harte. To conclude, looke where and how often so euer God hath commended vnto vs the studie and keeping of his lawe, he doth it alwayes in these tearmes: Thou shalt take heede to do those thinges which I commaunde thee: To giue vs to vnderstand that the principall point that he requiers of vs, is, that we haue a desire to please him, and a ready good will to do that, which he hath commaunded vs according to that grace and strength that he hath giuen vs, which is the thing that he most esteemeth in vs. As we see a father a great deale more to contente him selfe with that his sonne doth, be it neuer so litle, then of all that his seruaunt can do: because he esteemeth their workes not according to their greatnes, or the paine and time that they haue spente in doing them: but according to the will and readynes which they haue that do them.

We must then conclude, that the holynes of a Christian man, the deutie & diligence which

maketh him to employe those graces that he hath receaued of God, to profite in his feare, and continually to better him selfe in the exercise & grougth of good workes, are imperfect in many respectes. And as S. Jerom sayeth: the perfection of all the righteousnes that is in the flesh is maymed: & to be perfect it is necessarie that we acknowledge, confesse, and feele with an inward feeling, that we are imperfect. S. Augustine confirmeth the same, saying: that a righteous mans vertue maye be sayde to be perfect with this condicion, that his perfection consisteth in hauing the knowledge of his imperfection, and in making humble confession thereof before God. And how soeuer there be great lacke in vs in this point, & that our righteousnesses are as vnperfect beginnings in this worlde: yet neuertheles, we must not thinke that he will reiect and denie them: For he is not as other creditours rigourous and not to be intreated, who will not be contented with him that is bounde before they be payd and satisfied the vttermost farthing: but he is gentle and gracious, and is pleased with vs, when we denie not our debtes, and will not excuse our selues in this, that we are not able to paye: but without all dissimulation or constrainte, we frankly and freely confesse, shewing him the

Ieronim.

S. Augustin

desire

desire we haue to satisfie him, which yet we can not doe (by reason of our pouertie) and therefore humblie beseech him that he will take in good parte that litle we haue, and offring that vnto him, which he hath giuen vs of his owne speciall grace.

When we thus submitte our selues wholly vnto him, and praye him to vse such fauour and gentlenes as shall please him towardes vs, we likewise bearing and shewing such a sinceritie and vprightnes towardes him in the affaires we haue to do, there is no doubt but he will in like manner take in good part that litle which we present vnto him: and that both we and our workes (how imperfect so euer they are) shall be accepted and approued of him, in the fauour of his sonne, as if they were perfect, and absolute in euery point. For a father casteth not away his children, because they are sicke, croke backt, blinde, or maymed of hande or foote, or otherwise counterfait and imperfect: but handleth them more tenderly, & dealeth more softly with them, then with the others, respecting their debility and feeblenes. We cast not away wine though it haue lyes or groundes, nor golde how soeuer it be couered with durte. A housband man refuseth not lande, though it be ouergrowen with brambles and bryers: but

A similitude shewing that god reiecteth not his childrē though they be imperfect.

will vse the greater diligence to stocke it and to plowe it, hoping with his diligence, that it will bring forth fruite plentifully: God likewise will not refuse and put vs awaye, because he seeth manye imperfections and infirmities in vs, naye rather that is an occasion, that he will take the greater pittie vpon vs: as Dauid sayeth: Albeit (sayeth S. Ambrose) the light be oftentimes hidden by a cloude, which is caried before the sunne, yet therfore it is not quite put out. And the sunne ceaseth not to be the sunne, though his beames be stopped, and can not pierce vnto vs: euen so likewise howsoeuer our faith oftentimes be disfigured, and corrupted by many errours, doubtings and distrustes: it is not therfore quite choked, and we leaue not to be faithfull for these imperfections.

Psal. 103. 13.

S. Ambrose.

Two notable questions.

But before I ende this matter, it is meete, that we yet handle two pointes: one of which, is the reason, why our holynes is acceptable vnto God, and the seruice which we doe vnto him, seeing both the one and the other are imperfect: and seeing in his lawe he reiecteth all the sacrifices, which had in them any imperfection at all. The other point is concerning the cause wherefore he regenerating & sanctifying vs by his holy spirite, hath yet left such an heape of vices and imperfections in vs, and so much

1. Why God accepteth the imperfecte workes of his childrē.

2. Why the faithful are not perfectly regenerated in this worlde.

much corruption in our nature and life, which notwithstanding all the diligence and labour we can, to correct and mortifie it, yet we can not come any thing neare, to be wholy deliuered and exempte from it. Touching the first of these two pointes, there are two reasons, for which our vertues and workes are approued & accepted before God, how imperfect so euer they be. One is, because Iesus Christ hath couered and taken them vnder the cloke of his righteousnes, as one as we are vnited and knit vnto him: so as no such spotte appeareth in vs that can offend God. And for that he is our Mediatour towardes God his father, we see God no otherwise then in him and by him: As the father in like manner will not see nor beholde vs other where then in Iesus Christ, & through his humanitie as members and partes of his body. And this is the cause that maketh vs to appeare altogether other then we are: For euen like as loking aside through any glasse, be it blew or yelow or of any other coulor, all the thinges we see seeme to vs to be of the coulor of the glasse, through which we did beholde them: So God also beholding and looking vpon vs in his sonne, we seeme to him to be of his coulor, and we haue the appearaunce and brightnes of his innocency and righteousnes: which causeth

An answer to the first question.

Similitudes

that in seeing and touching vs, he thinketh he seeth & toucheth his owne naturall Sonne. As Isaack speaking to Iacob his yonger sonne, and feeling his necke and handes, thought it had bene Esau his eldest sonne. The other reason is, that the grace of Gods spirite, being mingled with our workes, our workes deriue & fetch from thence their greatest dignitie, bewtie, estimatiõ & free strẽgth, as when we mingle water with wine in a cuppe or in a glasse, that which is taken in there is called wine, though water be mingled with it: and albeit there be more water then wine (as it maye be) yet that which is the more principal and most precious part of all, beareth the name: euen so the works which we do by the grace of God, be it that they haue a great many spottes and imperfections, as they proceed from vs, yet for all that, they holde alwayes the name and reputation of him, who is their principall aucthour.

A similitude.

Concerning the second point, which is to know the reason why God doth not wholy regenerat and sanctifie vs, from the first hower that he calleth vs to his knowledge: seeing that all his workes are perfect, and that the lawe requireth of vs, that we shoulde be holy as he is holy: that is to say, that we shoulde be wholy and perfectly holy. We must marke, in verie deede,

An answer to the secõd question.

deede, that our regeneration and sanctification are workes of God which are perfect and absolute, as all that he doth is: But this perfection is successiue or by degrees. As we see that it is in many of his creatures. Seede cast into the earth doth not by and by sprout, encrease and come to his perfection: but by space and length of time, it attaineth to his perfection and ripenes, in that season that God hath appointed. A tree likewise, is not perfect assoone as it is planted. An infante is not streight wayes vpon the suddaine assoone as it is conceaued in the wombe of his mother, become a man but with time: euen so we are not all at the first dash regenerated. But this regeneration riseth by degrees, and being once begonne, then it proceedeth faire and softly by litle and litle encreasing euery daye, till we come to euerlasting life in the heauens. And in that God delighteth so to regenerate and entierly to reforme vs, to make vs altogether newe creatures, he doth it for three great and weighty reasons. First, because he would humble vs, forasmuch as being naturally enclyned to presume to much of our selues, we haue great neede that this pride be keept vnder: and that this mischeuous inclination which we haue to such manner of arrogancie shoulde be digged vp and rooted out of our

Similitudes

Three reasons why God differreth to regenerate vs perfectly.

hartes: which thinge God doeth after that he hath adopted vs leauing vs subiect to many miseries and diseases, aswell of the body as of the minde, to the ende that by this meane we shoulde be barred from lifting vp our selues in any opinion and admiration of our selues, and that we shoulde not speake more biggely and proudly then we ought: and herein he maketh of a poison, a remedy and preseruatiue against the poison that is in our nature: as we see by experience to be done in the confectiõ of triacle. For euen like as of the flesh of the viper men make a soueraigne and excellẽt remedy against the bytinge of them: euen so God maketh of those infirmities that remaine in vs after our regeneration, and which of them selues are deadly and damnable sinnes before him, an healthfull remedie to correct and represse the other vices & diseases, which are a great deale more pernicious: as is arrogancie and vaine confidence of our selues, contempt and forgetfulnes of God, and such other like pestilences which would kill vs suddainly, if they were not spedely preuẽted. Which thing our good God doth, who knowing the daunger wherein we are, as a good father is more carefull for our good & saluation then we our selues. By meane whereof, he preuenteth and cutteth of the waye

Similitudes full of great consolation.

that

that leadeth to the daunger of death (wherein otherwise we are) by these afflictiõs & diseases, which alwayes putteth vs in minde and setteth this medicine before our eyes, driuing vs to search after him & to requier aide at his hands. He dealeth with vs, as a iudge in some criminall processe, who will giue an enlargement, but yet with condition, or as they saye with a quousque, that is, till the time that he calleth it backe, and putteth him in his former estate wherin he was before, if it happen that he fall into any new fault againe. The iudges do this to keepe them alwayes in feare and diligence, to do their dewtie, and to stoppe them from taking to great liberty. God likewise doth so with vs, when he will pardon our sinnes and set vs at libertie, leauing vs notwithstanding a great sorte of infirmities and imperfections, which maye alwayes serue him, to charge vs, and for matter to call vs to a reckoning, when we would winde out of that bondage, and boast our selues abroade of the goodlynes of our reason and lotaltie.

The second reason is, because he woulde correct our ingratitude, which is a vice as naturall to vs as presumption. For there is nothing, into which we fall so easely, as into the forgetfulnes of God and of his benefits, which *The 2. reason.*

we haue receaued of him, especially when we are at ease and in prosperitie, which maketh vs wanton, and bereueth vs oftentimes of our senses and vnderstanding, which is an other of the most pernicious vices that can be and prouoketh the heauy wrath and iudgement of God against vs. And this is the cause, why he leaueth vs alwayes in such necessity to the ende he maye meete with such an inconuenience and giue vs occasion to seeke after him. Againe he doth vs not all the good he will doe, at one clappe, fearing least that we woulde vtterly abandon and loose it. And herein he doth as a father of an housholde well aduised, who at the first dash doth not much aduaunce his seruaūts: but doth for them by litle and litle, the better alwayes to put them in comfort and hope to receaue aduantage at laste, to the ende that by this meane, they maye be holden in seruice, and not departe from his house: euen so, God during the time that we are in this worlde, giueth vs more hope, then he doth benefites (and yet it is plaine that the graces that he bestoweth vpon vs are infinite) for feare leaste that if he shoulde make vs great and rich attonce, and shoulde giue vs out of hande all the good that he keepeth in store for vs, it woulde make vs to abandon his seruice, as we see sometimes it hap-

A similitude shewing the wisdom of God in gouerning those that he his.

happened to the Iewes by this occasion. As God reproacheth them by his prophet Ieremy: I spake vnto thee when thou wast in prosperitie, but thou saydest, I will not heare: this hath bene thy custome and manner from thy youth, &c. *Iere.22.21.*

The third reason, why God doth not attonce defende & fortifie vs and that throughout, when he hath regenerated vs, is, to the end that those infirmities which yet remaine in vs after our regeneration, shoulde serue to exercise vs, and to keepe vs from slothfulnes and sleeping. For hauing (as S. Ambrose sayeth) a robe or garment which is all to torne and vnsewed, and which for this cause had neede to be amended, we must occupie our selues in repairing and amending the same: and must auoyde by this meane slothfulnesse and idlenesse. Moreouer, being so exercised we grow more stronge and able to fight against the flesh and against all other enemies. Which thing was aunswered to S. Paule (when he desired to be deliuered from that pricke of the flesh that so continually troubled him) that he ought to contente him selfe with the grace of God which is sufficient: the strength whereof sheweth it selfe more in our infirmities then in our prosperities. Marke then that our diseases and afflictions stand vs *The third reason.* *S. Ambrose.* *2.Cor.12.9.*

in sted and greatly profite vs, when we suffer and beare them patiently, and we ought to contente our selues with the onely will of God that sendeth them, and likewise we must waye that the ende of these imperfections, which he hath yet left in vs after that he hath regenerate vs, is, to keep vs in obediēce, and to bridle vs, that we do not stumble and goe astraye. For euen like as to be wise, it behoueth vs to be fooles
1.Cor.3.18. (as S. Paule sayeth) and to the ende we maye see more cleerly (as Jesus Christ sayeth) to
Iohn 9.41. be blinde: euen so that we maye be perfect we must be imperfect, and that we haue fowle and dirtie feete, it is to keepe vs occupied in washing them.

The 4. point where the righteousnes of Christ is to be founde.

Hauing now handled these two partes of Christs righteousnes, it followeth necessarily to be knowen, what the matter is wherupō this righteousnes worketh, where it resteth and is to be founde either in him or in vs. Where as the Sorbonicall sophisters say that we can not be otherwise righteous, then by the righteousnes that is in vs: we saye cleane contrary, to witte, that ẏ righteousnes which we must haue to escape the iudgement of God, is not in vs,
2.Cor.5.21. but in Jesus Christ. As S. Paule sayeth, that he was made sinne for vs, that we shoulde be made the righteousnes of God in him. If we

will

will therefore rightely vnderſtande, how his righteouſneſſe is attributed vnto vs, we muſt know in what reſpect our ſinne is attributed vnto him: forasmuch as there is the like reaſon of the one, as there is of the other. But it is verie certaine that our ſinnes were neuer effectually in Jeſus Chriſt: who being conceaued by the holy Ghoſt was alwaies holy, innocent, cleane, and without ſpotte: but our ſinnes were onely imputed vnto him, to the ende that he ſhoulde beare the puniſhment of them for vs. *Heb.7.26.* In like manner, his righteouſnes is not eſſentially in vs. For to what degree ſoeuer, of holynes or vertue we be come vnto in this life, there is notwithſtãding alwayes in vs a great many of diſordred and vnruly affections: in our vnderſtanding a great many of euill thoughtes: in our mouthes a great many of euill wordes: in our workes a great many of imperfections and indirect dealinges: in all our life there is ſo much corruption and filthynes, that of it ſelfe it is abhominable and ſtincking in the ſight of God. Wherupon a man maye well know, that ſuch a righteouſneſſe as that is that was in the ſonne of God, neither dwelleth nor remayneth eſſentially in vs, but onely by imputation: to the ende that thereby we maye receaue the

Coloss. 3. 3. reward. And altogether like (as S. Paule sayeth) that our life is hidde in him, and must not be reueiled, till the time that he shall appeare in glorie: euen so is our righteousnes, the which appeareth not clearely enough, by reason of our imperfections, no more then our life doth by reason of our mortalitie and corruption, till the daye that God shall appeare in iudgement in the person of his sonne.

The righteousnes of the faithful compared to a robe. Psal. 132.

This is the reason why this righteousnesse is compared to a robe, according to that which is sayde in the Psalme: that the priestes should be clothed with righteousnesse. For as a robe is not borne with vs, and we haue it not from our mothers wombe as we haue our skinne: & it is not fastened to our bodies as the skinnes of beastes: euen so likewise neither is the righteousnes wherwith we are couered, as with a longe robe, to the ende that our imperfections maye not be perceaued. And this is a great benefite and mercie that God hath done and bestowed vpõ vs, in that he hath not assigned it to our selues nor put it ouer in our owne handes, but hath prouided a stewarde, to whom he hath deliuered it in trust: forasmuch as we are so ill aduiced, and so ill housbandes, that had we once the ordring of it our selues, the deuill by his sleightes and conuayaunces woulde sone be-

beguile vs. For if our fore fathers who were ſo wiſe & indued with ſo many excellent graces, coulde not keep ſafely that originall righteouſnes for ſo ſmall a time, (wherewith they were adorned from the beginning) and were notable to preſerue them ſelues for ſo litle a while from the crafty fetches and ſnares of Satan, but that they loſt it: What maye happen vnto vs, which are not ſo wiſe as they were, if we ſhoulde haue the keyes and charge of ſo great and precious a treaſure, as is the righteouſnes of the Sonne of God?

Diuerſe ſimilitudes ſhewing that it is not neceſſary that Chriſt his righteouſnes ſhoulde be eſſentially in vs.

It is a great commoditie and verie good for a tree, that the life and ſappe therof lyeth hidde in the roote: For this is the meane to defende, and preſerue it from the ſtormes and frostes of the winter: euen ſo is it for our profit, that our life and our righteouſnes are in Jeſus Chriſt, who is our foundacion and roote. For being locked vp in ſo ſure a place, it ſhal be preſerued and kepte for vs againſt all thoſe that woulde robbe vs or ſnatche it awaye from vs by treaſon or violence. We ſee that kinges and great lordes, they neither medle nor deale with any money, but they leaue their reuenues in the handes of their treaſorers and receauours to diſpoſe of them, contenting them ſelues when they haue any neede, or other affaires, to be

puruayed and prouided for, of that which is necessary: what nede thē is there that we should haue our goods in our owne hands, seeing that we shall lacke nothing, that is needfull for vs? We haue the grace of God, we are his children and consequently his heires: we are enlightened, guided, strengthened, and comforted by his spirite: we are citizens of his kingdome, and seruauntes of his household: to be shorte, we haue all the profites, rentes and commodities that grow of his righteousnes: what woulde we desire more? Is it not enough that we gather the fructe of a tree, and that it alwayes remayne in his place, and that we carry it not awaye with vs? In like manner also we must contente our selues to be partakers of the fructes of Christ his righteousnes, albeit it be not essentially in vs: but onely by imputation, and in asmuch as through his onely mercie it is bestowed vpon vs.

Howe we maye be righteous by therighteousnes of an other.

But here a doubt maye be moued, how we can be righteous, by the righteousnesse of an other, seeing that this is a personall qualitie, which can not be communicated to an other, no more then health, wisedome, strength and bewtie. Now can I be otherwise in health, then by the health that resteth effectually in my bodie: how can it be then, that I shoulde be righteous,

by

by the righteousnes, that dwelleth in an other? We must aunswere that this is done by imputation: And as a man maye be acquited of his creditour, by the paymente which some shall make of his owne money in the name of the debtour: euen so we maye be righteous, by the righteousnes of an other, when he is accepted in ouv name, as that is of Iesus Christ, when we are vnited and knit vnto him. All the members of the body without the eye, are altogether blinde of them selues, and yet notwithstanding, they cease not euery daye to do their duties rightely. The feete go without stombling, the handes without offending: in such sort that ech one of them is led in his worke by the light of the eye which illuminateth & directeth them: and as the sight of the eye is communicated to all the members of the body, who see by it and in it: euen so we in like manner are profited by the righteousnes of Iesus Christ, which is imparted with vs, as the sight of the eye with the members, to the ende that we maye vse it in the iudgemente of God, there to be acquited and iustified, and pronounced altogether innocente and discharged from all our faultes and offences.

The similitude of the debtour, acquited by an other.

The similitude of the members of the bodie enlightened by the eye.

Now let vs come to the other point, which is, to know by what meane we maye obtaine

The first point shewing by what

meane, we may appropriat to our selues the righteousnes of Christ Iesus.

this righteousnesse, and appropriate it to our selues. The onely meane is Faith as we maye know by many places of the scripture. For S. Paule sayeth that the righteousnes of God is by faith. Also: that righteousnes is reueiled in the Gospell, and communicated by faith. And in an other place: being iustified by faith, we haue peace in our conscience. And the Prophet also sayeth: That the righteous man shall liue by faith. And Iesus Christ, in the worde wherupon we altogether reste, sayeth: that who soeuer beleueth in him, shall not come into iudgement. And to them alwayes that were sicke, and were healed, he sayth commonly, that their faith had saued them, to the end to teach vs that faith is the meane, which is necessarie to obteine not only righteousnes, but also the adoption of children, the vndeserued fauour, and blessing of our God, and generally all the benefites of Iesus Christ. And altogether like as we apprehende coulloꝛs by the sight, & soundes by the eare: euen so we apprehende by Faith Gods promises, in which he offreth life vnto vs and all other his graces. As Ambrose sayeth: Faith is such a vertue and of so great strength, that it obtaineth all that God hath promised vs we beleuing in him.

Rom. 1. 17.
Rom. 5. 1.
Abac. 2. 4.
Iohn 3. 5.

Faith is the only meane to fasten vs to Christ, & obteine his righteousnesse.

S. Ambrose.

But when we speake so of Faith, we vnderstande

stande not by this name a bare opinion which we maye haue of the truth or a simple persuasion and consent, wherby we allow all that is contayned in the scripture: but we vnderstand by this Faith a liuely apprehension of the truth of Gods promises, and an assuraunce of his grace and fauour in Jesus Christ. Also, a full confidence that is sufficient to beare all the tentations, that can be laid vpon vs, and to beate downe death, the deuill, and all the gates of hell, and further to set it selfe against wrath, in the iudgement and malediction of God, the which it turneth from vs as a tempest & stormе when we are threatened. Now when we earst sayed that the lawe contayneth the promises of God, and in them his vndeserued fauour and grace, as the eye doth the colour, and the eare the sounde, and the other senses their proper obiect: we vnderstande this of the assuraunce and certaintie onely, and not of any carnall feeling. For the thinges that we beleeue, they can not be felt with the hande, nor seene with the eye, nor by any reason, or other sense of man be comprehended, and yet neuertheles they are more certaine, then the thinges that we feele, because our senses maye be deceaued. As the eye which wil iudge a peece of wood in the water to be crooked, although it be verie streight:

What thas iustifying Faith is.

But Faith when it is once grounded, & resteth it selfe vpon the worde of God, it is assured of all that is therein taught, and specially it embraceth Iesus Christ and draweth from him euerlasting life.

And albeit that oftentimes, considering the estate & disposition of those matters, it seemeth to vs that all thinges goe quite backwardes, contrarie to that which God hath promised vnto vs: yet notwithstanding, in this case we must
Rom. 4. 18. beleue, (as S. Paule sayeth) in hope against hope, and in no wise doubt, but his promises shalbe accomplished. For sooner shall heauen, earth, and all the worlde perish, then the least iote of that which God hath promised vs, and which is proceeded from his mouth, faill to be fully & wholy accomplished in his time. When our reason then, or sense will doubte of that which God hath sayd, or vnsaye and murmure against it, or any manner of waye, distrust his promises, we must resiste and sette our selues manfully with all our might against it, as Abraham did: and staye our selues (as he did) wholly vpon this, that God alwaye hath both will, and might to performe what soeuer he hath promised.

And when we come to consider the corruption and vice of our nature, the rebellion of our will

will against the will of God, our infirmities & imperfections, our distrust also that we haue oftentimes of his loue, and other doubts that we make of his prouidēce, we must not then doubt, but that our faith is mightely assailed, and that we haue to fight wonderfull sharpe and daungerous combats: but that we maye auoyde them, it is needeful (as in all other tentations) to keepe our selues alwayes to the woyde of God, and to make it a buckler against all that the deuill, our reason, and sense can alleage against his will, and those promises that he hath made vnto vs. We must (as S. Augustine sayeth) shutte our eyes from all that we maye see, and from all considerations that may turne vs awaye or feare vs: and open our eares, only to heare and meditate vppon that which God sayeth. And if on the one side considering the things that are present, we perceaue our selues a falling, & readie to be cast headlong into any distrust, we must on ẏ other side for to comfort our selues, behold Jesus Christ, of whome we are members & sheep of his pasture, & we must oppose his righteousnes against our vices, his life against our death: his obediēce against our rebellion, his fauours & rich grace against our wretchednesse and pouertie, his satisfaction against our debtes, his mercie against our mi-

Howe we must behaue our selues in tētations.

S. Augustin

serie, his strength against our weaknes and tẽ-tations, his merite and intercession, against all the accusations & informations which the law, our conscience and the deuil himselfe can bring forth and alleage against vs: alwayes thinking, that where sinne aboundeth, there grace yet more aboundeth, & hath farre more strength to saue vs then sinne hath to condemne vs. We must do, as they that go vp into an high tower, who looking downewardes & seeing the depth are afraide to fall, and that they maye be the more sure they laye holde of the railes: euen so must we alwayes leane vpon the righteousnesse and death of Iesus Christ, and strengthen our selues in that, to the ende we maye be preserued from falling downe.

A similitude.

Now hauing spoken of the meane whereby a man maye laye holde of the righteousnes of Christ, and of the qualitie of Faith that apprehendeth the same: it remayneth yet, that we speake of three thinges. The first, whether that for the laying holde vpon that righteousnesse, it be necessarie that Faith be perfecte. Then afterwardes, whether it must be, that it must be cleane from all vices: and lastely whether, it hauing bene once receaued in our harts, we can loose it afterwardes, and be depriued of it.

Three questions depẽding of the former point.

As

As concerning the first point, to witte, of the perfection of the lawe, it is impossible that euer we can attaine it: in as much as we are compassed about with a mortall body, which is so grosse and so slauish, and which fighteth without ceasing against the spirite, when it woulde lifte vp it selfe into any heauenly meditation: moreouer, hauing such an heape of darknesses and false opinions in our senses and vnderstãding, it is impossible that euer we should haue any perfect knowledge of God, what diligence, paine or trauell so euer we tooke to get it: hauing in like maner a harte entangled with so great passions and lustes which driues vs hether and thether, to all vaine affections, in such sort, that by reason hereof, we can not loue God perfectly and so consequently haue any perfect confidence in him: because confidence followeth loue, euen like as loue followeth knowledge.

1. To witte, whether faith must be perfect for the apprehending of Iesus Christ.

The knowledge therefore and confidence that we haue of God being imperfect, which are the two parts of Faith, it followeth hereof, that it can not be perfect, & that we haue neede continually to begge at Gods hande, that he will augment it in vs, and daye by daye stirre vs vp in the meditation of his promises, which is the true meane to nourrish, encrease, and augmente Faith. And wherto serue exhorta-

tions, prayers, Sacraments, and such other exercises, if our Faith coulde be perfect here? seeing that all these are not ordeined & fostred in the Church, to any other purpose, then to fortifie, and encrease the knowledge, zeale and affection of the faithfull.

2. Point whether Faith must be cleane from all vices.

Now let vs come to the second point. Seeing that our Faith is neuer perfect in this worlde, but is alwayes mingled with an infinit nomber of infirmities which alwayes remayne in vs, in such sort as there is none can saye his harte is cleane from all sinne: and that we haue neede in respect of this, to begge of God in our prayers, that he will pardon vs our offences, and making the confession of our Faith, to say: I beleue the remission of sinnes: Notwithstanding all this that, as yet our faith is very weake & defiled with many imperfectiõs, neuertheles it ceaseth not, to laye holde vpon that, that it shall please God to bestow vpon it. No otherwise (for examples sake) thẽ as a litle child who with his litle handes, or a poore man with his rugged, and scabbie handes refuse not to take breade and other almes, that a man will bestow vpon them, aswell as if they were greater and whole. Altogether like as diseases that are vniuersall throughout the whole body, (as is a burning agewe) though they weaken all the

A similitude of the force and strength of Faith.

An other similitude.

partes

partes of the same and specially the stomacke, more then all the reste: yet neuertheless hinder not but that it maye take a medecin, yea rather the disease is an occasiõ vnto it to prouoke it to take it: euen so also it ought to be so farre of, that the weakenes of our Faith should keep vs from embracing righteousnes and the other benefites of Iesus Christ, that it must prepare and dispose vs to the contrarie: According to which Iesus Christ sayeth to the Pharisees who thought them selues to be righteous, that he came not for their sakes, but to call sinners: adding the reason, to witte that they that are sicke haue neede of the phisition. And euen like as our diseases and infirmities let not but that our faith, be it neuer so weake, is yet capable of the graces of God, & of all the righteousnes of his sonne: euen so the littlenes of faith maketh it not lesse capable to be able to apprehend and embrace that righteousnesse: And like as altogether the Aple of the eye which is so litle, and yet, for all that can apprehend the light of the Sunne which is spred ouer all the horizon, yea and the Sunne it selfe which is farre greater, and more ample then all the earth: euen so the eye of faith, albeit that it be verie small, yet it ceaseth not to lay holde of the Sunne of righteousnes, together with his light, iustice and

Luc.5.35.

An other similitude.

other giftes, which are as great and as many in number.

3. Whether the elect can lose their faith.

But now let vs handell the laste of the foresayde three pointes, that is to saye: whether Faith being once receaued into our hartes, we can vtterly afterwardes loose, and forgoe it. For if hauing once receaued it, we can not be assured to keepe it constauntly to the ende, we shall alwayes be in doubt of our saluation. But if we be once perswaded and resolued in this point, that hauing bene inspired by the spirite of God in our hartes, it will still there abide, and dwell there for euer: this perswasion will alwayes keep our spirites quiet and contented, and they shall alwayes be ioyefull, yea in the middest of all tentations that maye assaile vs. Wherfore it is very necessary for vs to marke, and diligently to imprinte in our mindes, all the places of the holy scripture, in which God hath assured vs of the continuaunce and perseueraunce of his grace and fauour towardes vs, and of keping vs in the faith, and giuing of all the other giftes that he wil communicate vpon vs. As in the first place, this testimonie of S. Paule woulde be marked, which sayeth: that Faith is ioyned with election, and so by consequence founded vpon the counsaile and will of God which is euerlasting & immutable: Then

Rom. 8.

after-

afterwards that place of the Romaines where it is layd: That the giftes and calling of God are without repentaunce, that is to saye, irreuocable, when he hath once giuē them vnto vs. *Rom.* 11.29

Also, that which is layd in S. Matthew: That to him that hath, it shall be giuen. If then, we haue by Gods grace, Faith and the giftes of the spirite, let vs be certaine that they shall remaine still with vs, and looke by the selfe same grace that they were freely bestowed vpon vs, by the same they shall be keept and encreased. *Mat.* 13.12

Also there is an other place of the Apostle, that all they which were predestinate to life shall afterwarde be called, iustified, and in the ende glorified: If these fower pointes, wherein is contained the whole summe of the saluation of God his children be so chained in order one to the other, by an immutable decree of God: we must cōclude, that as our election is sure, stable & permanent, so also are the other effectes that do necessarily follow it: Also that which S. Iohn sayeth in his first Epistle: that he that is borne of God sinneth not, and the wicked toucheth him not, Also: that goodly protestation that the Apostle maketh for him selfe and all the faithfull, with so great assuraunce. I am (sayth he) certaine, that there is neither death, nor life, nor Angells, nor principalities, nor *Rom.* 8.30. *1. Iohn* 5.18. *Rom.* 8.38.

powers, nor thinges present, nor thinges to come, nor thinges highe, nor thinges lowe, nor any creature, that shalbe able to separate vs frō the loue of God which is in Jesus Christ our
Iohn 14.23. Lorde. Also, that which Jesus Christ sayeth to his disciples: If any man loue me he will keepe my worde, and my father will loue him, and we wil come vnto him and dwell with him. Whereupon we maye note that he sayeth not, We will visite him, and so departe againe, as many times we see freindes doe visite one an other: but he sayeth, we will abide with him: which is as much to saye: We will holde our selues to him, and dwell continually with him, without euer departing from him.

By all these places, and many more which might be rehearsed out of the scripture, it appeareth plainly that faith being once giuen vs of God, it shall neuer be quite taken away from vs, and so by consequence neither the grace of God, which alwayes followeth it. And although it seeme oftentimes for deade, as it was in Dauid, when he committed so great and heinous sinnes one after an other: yet for all that, there remained alwayes in his harte, a certaine remnaunte of it, which for a time was hidde as fire is vnder the Ashes. And like as when it is raked vp it sheweth not his brighte-

nes

nes nor heate outwardly, vntill it be vnraked and kindled in a flambe: euen so, it oftentimes falleth out with our faith, which is hidden and couered with many vices, which ẏ moſt holyeſt Sainctes of God them ſelues doe many times committe (euen as to fall into diſeaſes) the which continueth, till it pleaſe God to ſtirre vs vp a new by his ſpirite, and to light vs againe, euen like as whē a candle is put out. We muſt iudge then of our faith, as of a tree, which in winter ſeemeth to be deade, becauſe it hath no fruit nor leaues nor any outward appearaunce of life: and yet notwithſtanding it ceaſeth not to liue, & ſheweth that life, that was hidden within, outwardly, in the ſpringe time, bringing forth flowers and leaues, and taking againe his goodly hewe: in ſo much as the ſappe and ſtrength which keepte it ſelfe encloſed in the roote during the time of the colde, ſpreadeth it ſelfe throughout all the brāches, to make them greene and freſh againe: Euen ſo likewiſe is it of Faith, which ſeemeth oftentimes to be quite dead in vs, when it bringeth not forth any ſenſe or feeling neither of God, nor of his promiſes, nor of his commaundements or threateninges: And ſheweth not it ſelfe by any other wonted effect. Notwithſtanding this, it is aliue in vs, and the life of it hath his being in Ieſus Chriſt

in whome it is ingraffed & planted. And as the strength of this roote can neither be frosen nor deade: euen so neither can the Faith of a Christian which is so depelie grounded within be altogether extinguished and deade being the roote of all immortalitie, from whence it fetcheth his life.

Howe the righteousnes of Iesus Christ maye be distributed to all the faithfull.

But before we ende this matter, it is needefull to consider one wonderfull thing, to witte, how the righteousnes of Christ, which is one onely, maye be also entierly distributed to euery one of his members, without being deuided and sundred in any respect.

A similitude of the soule.

To aunswere this point, a man maye saye of it, as certaine Philosophers haue sayd of the soule of man, which is wholly throughout the whole body, and in euery parte a like: euen so is the righteousnes of Iesus Christ, wholly in the bodye of the whole church, as the soule, to giue it life and to mainteine it. Then is it altogether, in euery of the particular members, to make them strong, whole, stowt and of courage to doe all their offices and duties. The which thing a man maye vnderstande by two similitudes, one is of the voice, which being hearde of a great many persons, is in such sort receaued of euery one of them, prouided that they be attentiue, that the same is wholly vnderstoode,

Similitudes of the voice & the face.

without

without beinge deuided or sundred in anye respecte. The other similitude is of the face which maye be receaued in many glasses, and wholly representeed to all, without any diuision or separation of the same.

Let vs conclude then that a faithfull man through faith embraceth the whole righteousnes and all the fructes of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ: and that, for this cause he can not be condemned or accursed before Gods iudgemēt, no more then his head with whome he is inseparably knitte & vnited. When any man is faln into the water where he is vp euen to the chin, if he cannot be hurt, as lōg as his head is aboue the water: although that all the members and partes of his body be drowned and foundred: so also we cannot be stiffled or hurt in the deapths of death, seeing that Jesus Christ our heade, is alwayes lift vp aboue those deapths, & for that vppon the life and health of him dependes the health and saluation of all his members. *A similitude.*

Now it is time to shew by what signes and markes we maye know, whether we possesse Jesus Christ, and whether he dwell in vs and we in him. S. Paule sayeth to the Romains: that being iustified by Faith, we haue peace in our soules: which is an vndoubted token that Christ dwelleth in our hartes, that is to saye: *Howe we maye know whether Iesus Christ dwell in vs or no? Rom. 5. 1.*

when we feele there tranquilitie and reste, and that we beginne to be peaceable in our consciences: torments, bytinges, anguishes, terrors and distrustes there ceasing: and when in the sted of all these, there cõmeth in place, ioye, pleasure, consolation, and as it were a common feast where all reioyce. For then Iesus Christ liueth in vs and we in him: to witte, when all our thoughtes, our meditations, our workes and our delightes, doe carrie vs to him, as to the marke: And when we sette him out to our selues, to be our onely glorie, honour, riches, treasure, and the grounde of all our hopes: and that we holde him as our cheise and soueraigne good, that is to saye: when we neither knowe, desire, or seeke after any other but him: and that we are enlightened, by his light and spirite, are made wise through his wisedome, and stronge through his strength, and riche through his blessinges, and righteous through his innocencie, and blessed through his grace and fauour: & when we will haue no other maister to teach vs, nor other light to leade vs, nor other sight to direct vs, nor other truth to deliuer vs, nor other life to quicken vs, nor other king to gouerne and defende vs, nor other mediatour to reconcile vs, and make vs at one with God, nor other aduocat to pleade our cause in his iudge-

ment,

ment, nor other gate to enter in at to his kingdome, nor to make vs there reioyce of the perfect and full felicitie, which he hath reserued & keept for his elect. And in generall, when we neither seeke, nor will haue other fountaine to quenche our thirst, nor to satisfie our desires. See then howe Iesus Christ liueth in vs and we in him.

The perplexities and doubtes that are in the spiritual life of the faithfull.

It is verie true that the feeling, which we haue of all these thinges, is not alwayes a like and the same in vs. For asmuch as we are not alwayes a like disposed, at one time as at an other: and we haue not alwayes a like desire to see or to heare the worde of God, or to reade it, or to conferre with our brethern, which are more aduaunced in the knowledge and zeale of the seruice of God then we are. And likewise the spirite of God doth not touch and stirre vs vp alwayes a like. And this is the cause that in our faith, as in all other qualities, there is some time more and some time lesse, and that oftentimes it is more strong & liuely, and then some times againe more remisse and fainte. For altogether like as we see that water is more hoat or colde, according as it is neare or farre of frō the fire: euen so is it with vs, according as we are more or lesse exercised in the word, and driuen by Gods spirit, we haue more or lesse zeale

A similitude.

and affection. And altogether like as the disposition of the bodye followeth the qualitie and temperature of the aire, elementes and exercises, to which we giue our selues: euen so according to the places where we liue, and the nourishment that we there take, is the estate of our soules and consciences. But be it that water be sometime hoate and sometime colde, and that it chaunge his qualities, sometimes one waye, sometimes an other, yet is it alwayes water: euen so the man that is electe after his regeneration, is alwayes faithfull, how so euer in that he is the childe of Adam, he be sometimes enclined to euill, and that his faith is not alwayes in one and the selfe same estate, and that he is not alwayes accompanied with the like zeale and affection. For oftentimes it commeth to passe that we fele Jesus Christ to stirre and moue him selfe in vs, and by and by after, we haue no manner of feeling at all: but therefore he ceaseth not to dwell in vs, no more then our soules do to dwell in our bodies when we sleepe, although in sleeping we neither feele them, nor any of their operations. A woman who hath conceaued and beareth in her wombe a younge childe, feeleth it not alwayes stirre, notwithstanding when she hath felt it once or twise, she doubteth not but she is with childe:

euen

euen so it commeth to passe that we haue not a continuall feeling of Iesus Christ, to assure vs that he dwelleth in vs and we in him: but it sufficeth that we haue him when occasion serueth.

There are some also that feele and taste in some sort the righteousnes of Iesus Christ: but on ẏ other side they haue a farre greater feeling of their sinnes, which oftentimes maketh them to feare that they are not in God his fauour. Concerning this point we must note, that we more feele that which is euill, then that which is good. For as we see by experience, we feele the calamities and miseries of warre more then the fruicts and pleasures of peace, & the griefes of diseases, more then the quietnes of health, & the hardenes of pouertie, more then the profites and commodities of aboundance & riches: by reason whereof we ought not much to meruell, if we feele the stinginges and prickes of sinne a great deale more then the consolations of the righteousnes of Iesus Christ: seeing that sinne dwelleth in vs & not righteousnes, which thing is in cause that the one is more sensible then the other: Notwithstanding for all this we must not thinke, that sinne is greater and stronger then righteousnes, or that it can in any respecte be compared vnto it, or can be more able to condemne and destroye vs, then the

righteousnes of Iesus Christ and the grace of God is, to iustifie and saue vs. We haue some times in the toppe of a finger, some paine or greife, which we feele a great deale more then the health that is all ouer the reste of the bodie, yea though it be much greater then the paine of our finger. Wherefore we must not esteme the greatnes or the strength, whether it be of righteousnes or sinne, according to that feeling we haue: because the one is alwayes more sensible then the other: and specially for asmuch as we embrace righteousnes onely by faith which is of those thinges that are not outwarde and sensible.

A similitude.

A remedie against the tentation of the cõtinual feeling of our sinne onely.

There are others also that feele nothing else but their sinnes: and therefore they liue in continuall feare and distruste, where out they can not winde them selues, hauing no taste at all of the grace and righteousnesse of Iesus Christ, nor of any other meane, whereby it is graunted vnto vs. Which thing (of a truth) is verie dangerous: and they which feele them selues in such case ought earnestly to praye vnto God, that it will please him to quicken them vp, and to warme them through his spirite. And on their part it behoueth that they giue thẽ selues oftentimes to reade and to meditate vpon his promises, and that they frequente the Church,

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and heare exhortations, with the greatest attention they can, for asmuch as Faith is engendred by hearing. And although it come to passe that they doe all these thinges without any great affection, yet must they not therfore thinke, that they are altogether vnprofitable vnto them, no more thē a man that taketh bread and meate when he taketh and eateth it, without any great appetite. For although that he haue not such a pleasure in eating, as if he were well an hoongred: notwithstāding, that which he receaueth, ceaseth not to profite and sustaine him, as we see in sickenes: euen so do prayers and other Christian exercises, to which such colde persons do giue them selues. And how so euer they make them without any greate zeale, yet for all that they cease not to profite them. And in euery thinge that commeth to passe, howe soeuer it be that they feele their sinnes, they declare thereby that they are not altogether deade, nor vtterly depriued of life, and that therefore it onely remayneth for them to search the meanes how to encourage them selues, and to doe euen as a man woulde doe to fire, when it is out, which when he will kindle againe, he bloweth it, or to a lampe to which a man putteth oyle when the lighte is going out.

A similitude shewing that we must not be discouraged though we finde not alwayes in our selues that good desire and taste that we ought to haue, of the worde of God.

A remedie against the spirituall blockishnes or lacke of feeling.

There are other some which neither haue feeling of righteousnes nor of their sinnes, and these are altogether blockish, not thinking any whit of their saftie, nor regarding to hearken vnto anything that is spoken, taught or shewed to them for their helpe and recouery. Such diseases are verie daũgerous as are to mans body Apoplexies, the falling sicknes, Palseyes and such other which are altogether colde, killing the naturall heate, and choking all the senses. All that we can doe for these, is to praye vnto God to heale them, as he did the man sicke of the Palseye, and that he will restore to them the vse of their senses, that they maye feele aswell the burden and waite of their sinnes, as also the consolation of his grace.

Apoplexia is a disease engendred of colde humours, that taketh away a mannes senses and feeling.

The laste pointe is of the effectes of this righteousnes in vs after regeneration & that cõteineth 4. partes.

The laste point, that we haue to entreate of is of the effectes, that this righteousnes bringeth forth in vs after our regeneration: wherof there are fower principall partes.

The first is of the mortification of the flesh: The second of the confessiõ of Faith. The third of prayers: and the last, of charitie.

1. The mortification of the flesh.

Mortification of the flesh consisteth in this, that we suffer not sinne to reigne in vs: but couragiously fight against all the concupiscences thereof, obaying the spirite of the lawe of God, and groning continually vnder the burden of our

our infirmities, crying to God without ceasing, that in this case he will make an ende, and prouide for vs.

Confession consisteth in this, that we publish the meanes of our saluation, and that we witnesse it openly and euidently by our workes and wordes, at all times when occasion is offred vnto vs: without being hindred through the feare of any daunger what soeuer. 2. *The confession of Faith.*

As concerning prayers, it is necessarie that euening and morning, before and after meate, and in the beginning and ending of all our workes, we praye vnto God and praise him, begging that in our prayers which he hath cõmaunded vs to aske, and promised to giue vnto vs, with full Faith and assuraunce to obteine them: which we must grounde vpon his grace and promises, and vpon the merite and intercession of Iesus Christ our alone Mediatour. 3. *Prayers.*

As touching loue, first of all it is required that we loue God with all our hearte, with all our strength and with all our vnderstanding, and then our neighbour as our selfe, the which loue of our neighbour that it maye be righte it must be referred to that loue of God in such wise that it be the rule and measure thereof, and likewise of all other our affections. 4. *Charitie.*

Now in obseruing of these fower pointes,

we must first take heede that we be not dull and slothfull to do our indeuour therein. The which thing that we maye auoide, we must seeke out with all diligence euery occasion to applie our selues thereto, and take heede to auoide those thinges which maye turne vs awaye from it. Then afterwardes we must beware that in no wise we distruste the grace of God, nor the seruice that we offer vp vnto him, but that we be certainly perswaded, that we together with our workes, shalbe acceptable vnto him, through grace, That hauing this perswasiõ we may go faithfully & cheerefully forward in our vocatiõ.

VVe must auoide presumptiõ & an opinion of our selues.

And finally, that we take good heede to our selues, that aboue all thinges we be not presumpteous. And to the ende, to keepe vs from it, it is not enough, that we haue no opinion of our selues nor of our workes: but as it is written in the Psalme: we must not desire any thing that is to highe for vs, but be contente with that porcion and measure of grace, that it hath pleased God to bestow vpon vs, and we must applie our selues according to that power and meane that he hath giuen vs: As S. Peter sayeth: Let euery man as he hath receaued the gifte, minister the same one to an other as a good housband and stewarde of the graces and gifts of God. For if we haue receaued but two

Psal. 131. 1

1. Pet. 4. 10

tallents,

tallentes, and wil make as great traffique with thē, as he that hath receaued fiue, this is a preſumption before God, who hath meaſured out and proportioned his giftes to our capacitie, and requireth of profites and gaines according to the quantitie of thoſe graces & giftes which he hath beſtowed vpon vs.

We haue ſaide in the beginning that the ſecond iudgement wherto we muſt anſwere concerning our righteouſnes, is that of the lawe, which is no other thing then the ſeate of Gods righteouſnes, to which it is impoſſible for vs of our ſelues to ſatiſfie, and we haue neither workes, thoughtes, wordes, nor affections but they are to be condemned of God, if proceſſe be made out there for vs, & we be to be iudged in this courte: as S. Paule ſayeth that all they which are vnder the lawe, are vnder the Curſe: and in an other place, he calleth the law the Miniſter of Death. And Dauid ſpeaking to God ſayeth: Enter not into iudgement with thy ſeruant: For no man liuing ſhalbe iuſtified in thy ſight: Alſo in an other place he ſayeth: O Lord if thou looke vpon our iniquities, who ſhall ſtande in thy iudgement? For aſmuch as this iudgement is ſo entier, where all thinges are examined, in ſuch ſort, from point to point, that the brightneſſe and lighte of the moone and ſtarres, the righteouſnes and innocencie of the

The ſecond iudgemens where we muſt anſwere concerning our righteouſnes.

Gal.3.10.
2.Cor.3.7.
Pſal.143.2
Pſal.130.3

Angells, shall hardly escape from being reiected and censured, as Iob sayth. How then shall we be able to aunswere there, and what meanes shall we alleage for our iustification, that we maye escape? S. Paule sayth, They that haue sinned without the lawe, shall perish without the lawe. But seeing that they shall be condemned by the lawe, who haue transgressed it: what shall we do then? we can aunswere and alleage many thinges for our defence.

Iob 25.5.
Iob 4.18.
Rom.2.12.

The waye how to be deliuered from the iudgement and malediction of the lawe.

First we can auoide this iudgement and ridde our selues from it demaunding to be sent before the throne of Gods mercye: forasmuch as being free and deliuered, we are not any longer vnder the lawe, but vnder grace: so as Moises is not nowe any more our Iudge but Iesus Christ: to whom the father hath giuen aucthoritie and iudgement. Moreouer mercye (as S. James sayeth) is aboue righteousnes: which is as an inferiour and lower courte, from which we may appeale to that highe and great courte of God his mercie: wherin Iesus Christ is sette downe and keepeth the highest place as chiefe presidente. And as it is he that is our aduocate, so we are assured that he will giue vs a discharge in our fauour. Wherefore if the lawe, Moises and the righteousnes of God doe condemne vs, we must not therefore be afraide: forasmuch as this is such a simple sentence,

Galat.4.7.
Iohn 5.22.
Iam.1.13.

as

as we maye at all times appeale from it. To conclude, the lawe is as a receauer, which taketh accompte of our debtes, which is so harde and rigorous that by no intreatie it will remitte and pardon any thing of that we owe, and will make vs to pay to the vttermost farthing: But the Lord is he that stayeth & closeth vp the counte, to witte Iesus Christ, being (contrary to the law) good, gracious and liberall, entreating vs with all gentlenes, neither demaunding any thing of vs but that which we be able to paye, and furnishing vs him selfe with that which we lacke, and acquiting vs of his mere liberalitie of the ouerplus, so that presently it maye be supplyed in him.

Furthermore we maye yet alleage in this iudgement, that the lawe can not make our processe: but Iesus Christ, and the mercie of God be our assessours, who moderate iudgement in such sort, that not onely it can not be hurtefull vnto vs, but very healthfull for vs. As the iudgement of the woman taken in adulterie, the figure therof: who being threatened before Iesus Christ, by the Pharisees, who maintayned that by the lawe of Moises she ought to be stoned to death, was notwithstanding all that they coulde alleage, sente awaye by Iesus Christ, without her accusers, or any others that were in their companie, once inter-

Iohn 8.3. An allegorie of our exemption from the iudgemẽt of the lawe by Iesus Christ.

posing to hurte her in any sorte what so euer: Onely Jesus Christ sayth vnto her, that hense forwarde she must take heede that she sinned no more: and so that condemnation which the ministers of the law had pronounced against her, was by Christ, turned into a simple admonitiõ and instruction. A thing that ought well to be marked, to the ende we maye vnderstand what ought now a dayes to be the true vse of the lawe towardes the faithfull: which condemneth them no more to death as it was wont, but teacheth and enstructeth them of their deutie, exhorteth them to that, and reproueth, and procureth, by all meanes so to direct, and bring them on, as they maye be sufficiently enabled to goe to the schoole of Jesus Christ.

The vse of the lawe towardes the faithfull.

The lawe and Jesus Christ in like manner are as a Phisicion and surgeon, comming to a sicke man to heale him. The surgeon openeth the veine, and taketh awaye bloude from him, not to the ende to make him to dye, but as a remedie, appointed for the recouerie of his health and sauetie. The lawe also peirceth our impostume, & sometimes maketh a great hole in it: but neither to the ende to kill vs, nor to hurte vs: but to bring vs into a good order, to the end we may be the more easely healed. Those sentences then, that the lawe pronounceth against vs, they are profitable for vs, for asmuch as they

A comparison & difference of the lawe & the Gospel.

they awaken vs and make vs to looke to our selues and to our affaires, and to be more diligent to search out the meanes wherby to bring vs into good order.

The third meane, or defence against the iudgement of the law.

The last bulwarke that we can set against the iudgement of the lawe, is that Iesus Christ hath fulfilled the same for vs, as he him selfe witnesseth: that he came not to abolish the law, but to fulfil it. Which thing S. Paule also confirmeth saying: that Christ is the accomplishmente of the lawe in righteousnes to all beleuers. Wherfore we be not, in any wise subiect to death, nor to the curse, that the lawe hath pronounced against them, that haue transgressed it, seeing we are the members of Iesus Christ, and that we haue keept and fulfilled it in him. And as in Adam we were made sinners through disobedience: euen so being incorporated into Iesus Christ, we are righteous through his obedience: and so consequently exempte from the iurisdiction and power of the lawe: which can not exercise the auctority, it hath to condemne vs, but against them, that transgresse, and are rebellious against it. Whē therfore we endeuour our selues, to do our deutie, to mortifie, through his spirite the workes of the flesh, there is not any condemnation to vs, nor to all them that are in Iesus Christ, who are by a liuely Faith vnited to him, in-

Mat.5.17.
Rom.10.4.
Rom.8.1.

graffed & incorporated into his righteousnes.

The third iudgement against vs, to witte, the iudgement of men and of the remedies of the same.

The third kinde of iudgement whereof we spake in the beginning of our diuision is the iudgement of men: which commonly is more corrupte and vniuste, by reason of their ignoraunce & false opinions, which they conceaue & frame in their owne vnderstanding: and likewise because of their passiõs and desires, which often times driue and carry them hedlong contrarie to their wil. Wherfore we must not trouble our selues much to satisfie that, especially in matters that appertaine to religion and conscience. As in the doctrine of saluation, which we must not take from any other, but from the spirite of God, nor search for it any where else but in the lawe and the Gospell: where all is taught by the writinges of the Prophetes and Apostles. Wherefore there is no other rule of our Faith and obedience, but the onely will of God, that is to saye we ought not to beleue any thing, as concerning our saluation, but that which he hath promised in his holy Gospell, nor doe any thing for his seruice, but that which he hath commaunded and ordeined in his lawe. And when so euer it be founde, that men will be so rashe either to adde, or to diminish, or to alter any thing in the worde of God, there a man maye iudge, and surely perswade him selfe of such, that they are false teachers

Our faith must not depend vpon others.

and

and prophets: and so likewise of them that beleue & submitte them selues vnto such by whom they are abused and deceaued. This is the reason why S. Paule sayeth, that if he woulde please men, he shoulde not be the seruaunt of Iesus Christ. And in an other place: If an Angell from heauen shoulde teache any other Gospell then that Iesus Christ and his Apostles haue published, that he woulde accompt him accursed. It is therefore needefull to be taught that in these thinges, belonging to the honour and seruice of God, and to the saluation and rest of our soules, we reste our selues altogether vpon the scripture, and thereto bend our selues as to the onely marke, that we neither hast to much forwarde, nor lagge to much behinde. And further that we hange not vpon the iudgement of men, as whereby we maye either be iustified or condemned. *Gal.1.8.10*

Sainct Paule writing to the Corinthians sayeth: I passe litle to be iudged of you, or of the iudgement of men, no I iudge not my owne selfe: forasmuch as I know my selfe not to be culpable in any thinge, yet am I not thereby iustified: but he that iudgeth me is the Lorde. Therefore iudge not before the time, before the Lorde come, who will bringe all thinges to light, manifestinge the thinges that are hidde, and all the counsailes and affections of *1.Cor. 4. 3. 4. &c.*

the harte: thē shal euery one be praised of God. Hereby he would teache vs not much to esteme the iudgement of men be it in good or euill, because they are vaine of their owne nature, and if they praise vs, this ought not to puffe vs vp, or to encrease the opiniō we haue of our selues. Also if they dispraise or condemne vs, we ought not therein to discourage our selues hauing the spirite of God, his worde and our owne conscience, to susteine and iustifie vs.

We are at this day excommunicated of the Pope, and condemned and reiected from his presence and of the most parte of men: and principally of them, who are in greatest estimation and credit of knowledge and wisdom, notwithstanding concerning the Pope, we ought to make no reckoning of him nor of all ẏ sentēces that he can pronounce and thunder out against vs. For he is the enemie of Iesus Christ, and consequently Antichrist: and an enemie of the light, forasmuch as all his workes are euil: and of the truth, being the first Embassadour and minister of lying: and to conclude, an vtter enemie to the saluatiō of men, and of the honour of God. Also he is the sonne of perdition, to cast awaye and to destroye all those, which will depende on his authoritie, and wilbe brought to his opinion touching the estate and saluation of their conscience. Is not this he which beareth

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the name of blasphemie vppon his forhead, to shewe that he woulde be the protectour? It is not therfore to be meruailed at, if he condemne and holde those for heretiques, which loue the honour of God, and employ them selues to aduaunce the kingdome of Iesus Christ. *Apoc.13.1.*

As concerning the great and wise men of this world we ought not also to discourage our selues, if they sette them selues with all their strength against the truth, wherof they haue no knowledge as Iesus Christ sayeth: that his father hath hidde from the great and wise of the worlde, the misteries of the kingdome of heaueu, and hath reueiled them to litle ones. *Mat.11.25.* According to which S. Paule sayeth: that he preached Iesus Christ crucified, which was an offence to the Iewes, and foolishnesse to the Grecians: alleaging that which is written in Esaie: I will destroye the wisdome of the wise, and will caste awaye the vnderstanding of the prudente. *1.Cor.1.23.* *Isay 29.14.* And adioining that same question. Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this worlde? Hath not God made the wisedome of this worlde foolishnes? Ieremie sayeth also, seeing the people to make no accompte of his worde: I will get me vnto the great men, and will speake vnto them. For they haue knowen the waye of the Lord, which the people knew not. *Iere.5.5.* But these also haue bro-

ken the yoke, and haue banded them selues together to speake against the worde of God, as the others. All these places serue to shew vnto vs, that God hath chosen the foolish thinges of the world, to confounde the wise. And hereof it is, that we see nowe a dayes that the greatest men and they that are of most reputation in the worlde, do most obstinatly resiste the truth: and shewe by worde and effectes, that they are most blinde in God his matters, taking darkenes for light, sower for sweete, and sweete for sower.

Now as the greatnes and aucthoritie of men ought not to astonish vs, nor any whit to moue vs, so also, neither the nomber and multitude
Mat.7.13. of them. Forasmuch as the waye that leadeth to destruction is broade, and is chosen of the greatest nomber of persones who enter there, and goe on in it because that men are naturally enclined to embrace errours and lyes, and their is none, but the elect of God which beleue and loue the truth: who are a litle nomber (as Iesus Christ sayeth) in respect of the reprobate.

We conclude then, that to the ende we be righteous it is not needful that we satisfie men, nor conforme our selues to their iudgement, in matters that concerne the honour and seruice of almighty God, & the estate of the conscience: wherin oftētimes they erre, because they leaue the worde of God which is the only way wher-

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by a man maye well and rightely iudge and define of these two poincts, and betake thē selues to the iudgement and definition of their owne opiniōs and phantaseis, which are for the most parte fonde and ridiculous.

There are two thinges in which we maye applie our selues to mans iudgement, that is to say, to thinges meerly ciuill & politique, and to thinges indifferent. For it must not be that a faithfull man be partiall in policie, neither that he violate the publique peace, as lōg as he may keepe it & mainteine it without offence to God, or trouble to the quiet of his conscience. But it behoueth that he obaye the ordinaunces of the Magistrate, and keep the statutes, lawes & customes of the countrey where he dwelleth, carefully watching that he giue no occasion of offence, nor suspicion that he will innouate or alter any thinge in the estate and policie of the common wealth.

Of the vse of ciuill & politique thinges.

As concerning thinges in different, we must follow the counsaill of S. Augustine writing to Januarius: that when the thing that is commaunded of men is not contrarie to Faith, nor to good customes, we must hold them for indifferent, & not gaine stand in any thing what so euer: to ẏ end to keep peace w̄ those with whom we are conuersaunt. For which cause Uitcor Bishop of Rome, was sharpely reproued by

Of the vse of thinges indifferent. S. Augustin

Ireneus & other auncient fathers: because that for ỹ diuersitie of ceremonies, which they kept in the celebration of Easter, he had separated his Church from the Communion of the Easte churches. The which thing was attributed vnto him for great presumption and arrogancie, that he would go about, to subiect all Churches to the Customes and ceremonies which were obserued in his: and for hauing renounced the common confederation, in which he ought to haue abidden vnited and fast knitte, and not to haue broken the chaine of charity, which ought to haue locked together alike all the members of the vniuersall Church.

The fourth & last iudgment, which is that of the conscience.

The last indgement to which we must aunswere, is that of our conscience, which either ministreth vnto vs great consolations, or else great torments, according as it is either euill or well disposed. For we may saye that a pure conscience, is a paradise, which we maye haue in this worlde: forasmuch as there is not anything which can bring vs greater peace & contentmente, be it in prosperitie or in aduersitie. Euen like as ỹ bodie when it is in good health, is strong and able to beare the great stormes & colde of winter, and likewise the excessiue and vntemperate heat of the sommer: euen so a conscięce that is whole, & fully resolued, can beare stowtely all accidẽts, without yeelding or shrinking

A good cõscience is a paradise in this worlde.

A similitude.

king vnder the burden and waight of any thing what so euer may happen vnto it. Cõtrarywise an euill and sicke conscience is a verie hell, and there is nothing in ỹ woꝛld that may moꝛe vexe & toꝛmente vs. And as a good conscience is as suger to sweeten and mollifie all our affections: euen so ỹ other is as sharpe vinegre, which sowreth & troubleth all our ioyes and consolations: And moꝛeouer as the one is sufficient to resist all tentations: euen so ỹ other is softe, cowardly & vanquished assone as it is assailed. It is necessarie theꝛefoꝛe that as we are curious in looking to the health of our bodies, obseruing foꝛ that purpose, the diete and gouernment that is deliuered & appointed by the phisition vnto vs, & cõtrarywise abstaining from all those meats, & excesse which may offende & alter our health: euen so that we haue the same desire and care to pꝛeserue that health of our soules, marking diligently all the rules and oꝛdinaunces of good life, which God the most highe and soueraigne phisition hath appointed vs, and taking heede on the other side, to auoide and shun that, which he hath pꝛohibited and foꝛbidden vs.

An euill conscience a hell.

Let vs consider a litle, what great pleasure and ioye a man may haue, who returning home after a long ioꝛnie into his owne house, findeth there his wife, who commeth to take him about the necke, and embꝛaceth him, killing and ma-

king much of him: doth not this make him by and by to forgette all his trauell which he hath endured in his iorney? as contrarywise, if he should find his wife after his returne brawling, riotous, frowarde, & who in ſted of comforting him, would all maner of wayes vexe & torment him, woulde not this encreaſe and double his paines and torments which he hath ſuffred by the way? Euen ſuch is ẏ eſtate of the conſciẽce. Although that our enemies commit a thouſand outrages, violencies & villanies againſt vs: If we returning from our ſelues, and entring into our own conſcience, find there one with a chereful & merrie countenaunce, which doth comfort and contente vs, it maketh vs in a momente to forgette all our enemies. But on the other ſide, if it be naught, it weryeth vs in ſuch ſort, ẏ we ſhal not find any houſe worſe then our owne, nor any place where we maye worſe quiet our ſelues, then with our ſelues. Iſaie ſayth: ẏ an euill couſcience is as a ſtreighte bed, in which a man can not ſtretch him ſelfe, nor turne him ſelfe at pleaſure. It is an hard thing for a man there to ſleepe well and to reſt quietly: Likewiſe a man which hath a feſtred cõſcience, he can not finde any place or condicion to contente him, & which is not altogether to ſtreighte for him. This is the cauſe that Dauid ſo often prayeth to God that he will ſet his impriſoned harte at large, ẏ

Iſai 28.20. *A fine ſimilitude.*

Pſal. 4.2.

is

is to say, that he wil shew him this fauour, that he may alwayes haue a sound & vpright cõscience.

The way to haue a good conscience.

Now to ỹ end we may haue such a cõscience, it behoueth that it be will foũded: & that it may be well founded, it is requisite that ỹ only word of God be the foundation therof: so as we make no conscience, but to do those thinges that God hath forbidden & to leaue vndone those thinges that he hath cõmaunded. For asmuch as he that wil stretch out his cõscience beyond this, knoweth not how to saue him selfe, but that ranging beyond the boũdes of Gods word, he must haue infinit scruples, which shall vexe him cõtinually. And to be short, there is nothing in ỹ worlde more pernitious, nor more to be feared, then to cõfound ỹ conscience about such imaginatiõs, or about the cõmaundements & traditions of men.

A differẽce betwixt the conscience and the peace of cõscience.

But here must be noted that the conscience & the peace of conscience are thinges diuerse, and that they haue diuerse foundacions. For the cõscience (as hath bin already declared) is ruled by the law, that is to say, by the cõmaundements, & forbiddings of God. But ỹ peace of conscience, hath for his foundacion ỹ Gospell, ỹ promises, the grace of Iesus Christ & his righteousnes. And as there is no other meane to answere to ỹ iudgement of God, but ỹ righteousnes & innocẽcy of Iesus Christ: euẽ so is it he alone which can stand vs in sted to satisfie ỹ iudgemẽt of our

Iesus Christ onely hath satisfied the iudgement of our conscience.

cõsciẽces. For if we looke vnto our worꝛkes we haue our consciences streighte way vexed & disquieted with feare & distrust of not hauing done our deutie, in not obaying God, noꝛ keeping of his cõmaundements, as we were bound: which was the cause ẏ S. Paul sayed, that he felt him selfe not culpable of any thing, but yet foꝛ this, he thoughte him selfe not iustified: to giue vs to vnderstand: that there is nothing ẏ can pacifie our cõscience, but ẏ only righteousnes of Iesus Chꝛist, & not our own, which is alwaies imperfect & defiled with many filthes of our cõcupiscẽce, & by reason hereof cannot contẽt our hart, noꝛ make vs to take any pleasure in many of those thinges we haue done oꝛ left vndone: but the bloud, woundes & death, and the side of Iesus Chꝛist opened (as S. Bernard sayth) is that, which pacifieth the conscience, when as it would thus toꝛmẽt & persecute vs: Beholde the freedom & refuge we haue, where we may retire to sauetie. To conclude then and here to make an ende of this treatise, the righteousnes of Iesus Chꝛist, is the only meane, wherby we are iustified befoꝛe the iudgemẽt of God, of the lawe, of men, and of the conscience.

2. Cor. 4. 4.

FINIS.